

LETTERS

FROM AN

OLD MAN

TO A

YOUNG PRINCE;

WITH THE

ANSWERS.

TRANSLATED from the SWEDISH.

VOL. II.

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M.DCC.LIX.

LETTERS

OF THE

ROYAL

ACADEMY

OF SCIENCES

AND ARTS

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY



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LETTERS

TO A

YOUNG PRINCE.



LETTER XLI.



HIGH rank is universally esteemed a great blessing; but I should be glad to know wherein the superior happiness of kings may properly be said to consist. As to power, merely considered as such, it is a prerogative enjoyed by every lion of the forest. The most gaudy apparel, even with all the assistance of wealth, art, or taste, can never equal a flower of the field, nor the gorgeous tail of the proud peacock, in beauty. That we are able to follow the bent of our passions, is a very

dangerous advantage, and but too often paid for by a severe repentance. The power of doing good, is a great prerogative, and a real happiness; but it is considerably imbittered by the frequent necessity of being severely just. One single punishment inflicted on a fellow creature gives more pain to a feeling heart, than the pleasure arising from a hundred beneficent actions can repay. Extravagant praises, and crouds of cringing attendants, cannot but be surfeiting and troublesome to a great mind. Now wherein consists the superior happiness of a king? I will not mention virtue and a good conscience: we lower-ranked mortals should be ill-off, if these were the special rights of majesty. No! in regard to these, the pretensions of a beggar are equal to those of the greatest monarch.

I CANNOT help being of opinion, that those who sweat in the hot garret, as well as

the

the poor creatures who shiver in the cold cellar, have some reason to envy the temperate situation of the family between them.

THERE is a certain peaceful contentment, that may be best copied from private life, without which it is difficult to form an idea of happiness. How blest is that prince who is considered by his subjects as their best friend, who in some measure appears to be their equal, whose scepter seems of no weight, whose power is founded on affection, whose security is the universal love of his people ! In this light, he may be regarded as a tender father in the midst of his family. He sees his children playing around him, rejoices in their mirth, and sometimes even joins in their amusement. A prince that is beloved can hardly do amiss, whilst he that would only be honoured and feared, can do no one action without blame.

6 LETTERS TO A

PROVIDENCE hath been pleased to fix Your ROYAL HIGHNESS in the first rank of mortals. You have, on one side, ambitious flattery, and sincere friendship on the other. The first is royal property, the latter is the patrimony of an honest man. Take your choice, my dear SIR, for it is in your power. Much officiousness, great apparent veneration, constant endeavours to oblige, extravagant praise, low bows, and submissive behaviour, are the general characteristics of a court; but, in remembering the wide difference between a mere monarch and a father of his people, you will not forget, that these are no more than the shell or surface of felicity.

HEAVEN grant that every individual Swede may love Your ROYAL HIGHNESS with the same zeal with which I am

Your, &c.

Hellekis, August 1,

1752.

LET.

LETTER XLII.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS hath so often
 seemed delighted with the fable of Pan-
 dora, that I flatter myself you will not be dis-
 pleased to have it repeated once more. I fear
 I shall hardly do justice to my friend La Motte;
 but I depend upon your indulgence.

F A B L E.

NOT e'er a school-boy but can tell
 Who Vulcan was, and how he fell,
 Because, forsooth, his aukward mien
 Displeas'd or Jove, or, chance, the queen.
 This limping out-cast of the sky,
 Perhaps to make his court on high,
 One day resolv'd to forge a creature
 Of tender shape and comely feature.
 His bellows straight were set a blowing,
 And every nimble hammer going.

8 LETTERS TO A

Now, e'er the labour seem'd begun,
Behold, the human figure shone
Complete. The work was shewn above,
And all th' assembled gods approve.

' My son,' exclaims the god of thunder,
' Why thou hast made a perfect wonder !
' A form so fair, so like thy wife,
' Deserves, and I will give it, life.'

He spake, and touch'd her brazen breast,
When lo ! the woman stood confest.

The other gods, like gods, were kind,
Resolving not to be behind.

They gave her simpers, smiles, and graces
Artillery soft of female faces.

Wate'er wild fancy could desire,

All women boast, all men admire.

O had she dropt her curt'sy here !—

But see the god of hell appear !

' Before you go, my pretty maid,

' Accept this box, old Pluto said ;

' Its

YOUNG PRINCE. 9

‘ Its treasure if you’ve but the sense
 ‘ To keep it shut, will prove immense.’

She bade adieu, but as she ran
 Gaz’d on the box, and thus began ;

‘ Not open’t ! faith, an odd request :
 ‘ Then where’s the treasure ? all a jest !’

She said : and straight th’ audacious fair

Unlock’d the box, and fill’d the air

With human woes, and ev’ry vice let fly.

Ah, fatal female curiosity !

To this old story add a new,
 If not as good, at least as true.

‘ Now,’ cry the Vices, ‘ here we are ;’

‘ But, since we cannot live on air,

‘ ’Twere fit that each shou’d try to find

‘ An habitation to her mind.’

‘ Be’t mine, Ambition cry’d, alone

‘ To sit sumblime on grandeur’s Throne.’

Self-interest own’d, her choice to range

The various maze of stocks and ’change.

Debauchery declar'd an itch
 To spend her days among the rich,
 In hopes the constant charms to prove
 Of various wines, and varied love.
 Hypocrisy, with pious face,
 Within the temple chose a place.
 But now a proper friend to find,
 For Jealousy, among mankind?
 Could Jealousy despair of thriving,
 Long as two poets, or two girls were living?
 But, after all things seem'd decided,
 Miss Vanity stood unprovided.
 'No matter, friends,' she said, 'no fear
 'I'll find a dwelling ev'ry where.'

THIS Pandora seems to have had full as
 much curiosity as our common mother Eve,
 or any of her fair daughters. Were the Vices
 again collected into a box, and committed to
 the care of a lady, I am apt to believe we
 should,

YOUNG PRINCE. 11

should, at their first issuing, be much more shocked at their number and deformity, than we seem to be now that a long familiarity hath made them, in a manner, tolerable.

You see, my dear SIR, that these beauties of the creation are not without blemish, and it is but reasonable; for why should we poor men be burthened with the weight of every imperfection? But notwithstanding this universal deluge of evil, let us by no means despair. I am convinced we have all the same right and possibility of happiness as before, and am entirely of Voltaire's opinion, when he says,

On dit, qu'avant la boîte apportée à Pandore,
Nous étions tous égaux : nous le sommes encore ;
Avoir les mêmes droits à la félicité,
C'est pour nous la parfaite et seule égalité,

Before

Before Pandora brought us vice and pain,
Mankind were equal: so we yet remain;
One common right to bliss will ever be
Our sole and most complete equality.

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS is not ignorant
that curiosity is frequently the root of incre-
dible evil: and for that reason you have been
careful to stifle it in time. I remember, when
we were together at Ulrichsdahl, you once al-
lowed me to put it to the proof, by intrusting
you, twenty-four hours, with the key of a
cabinet of curiosities; but you return'd me the
key without having used it. What a pleasing
prospect do your rising virtues afford to,

Dear SIR,

Your, &c.

Hellekis, August 8.

1752.

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

THIS letter brings Your ROYAL HIGHNESS another of your favourite fables. I am the more willing to translate them into our own language, as it may be a means to give my countrymen, yet unborn, a true idea of your taste, even in the very dawn of life.

F A B L E.

The ELEPHANT, RHINOCEROS, and Jupiter's
MONKEY.

IN former days, as poets chant,
Rhinoceros and Elephant
Fell out; and, if I'm told no lie,
They quarrell'd for precedency.
Their side-way looks, and fullen mein,
Had murmur'd long their jealous spleen,
But now they could no more dissemble:
High words made all the forest tremble.

They

They threaten'd, rag'd, and flew from far,
 Whilst Fame proclaim'd th' impending war.
 The bloody day was fix'd : and now
 Sir Elephant was marching slow,
 Revolving in his martial brain
 Triumphant heroes, heroes slain,
 And every stratagem of fight,
 When Jove's own Monkey came in fight.
 This Monkey, as the sage aver,
 Was often chose ambassador,
 When Merc'ry by the thunder god,
 Was sent, perchance, some other road.

- ‘ THANKS to the gods !’ the heroe cry’d,
- ‘ With me they shall be satisfy’d.
- ‘ I know to tell me, thou art sent,
- ‘ That heav’n, impatient, waits th’ event
- ‘ Of that great day, when I shall wield
- ‘ My trunk, amid the martial field.—
- ‘ I, who, in strength and right of birth,
- ‘ Am ’noblest animal on earth.

‘ Yes,

YOUNG PRINCE. 15

‘ Yes, thou’rt descended from the sky
 ‘ To see me slay mine enemy,
 ‘ And bear the welcome news on high.’

‘ I CRAVE thy pardon, noble beast:

‘ Not such my errand in the least,’

Reply’d the Monkey. ‘ I am sent

‘ To see if yon poor ants have spent

‘ Their winter store: that’s my intention.

‘ Of thee, in heav’n, I heard no mention.’

THUS we see that even the heathen world did not believe the great and mighty on earth to be of equal consideration in heaven. How much more reason have we to remember this truth, whose religion teaches, that all sublunary grandeur is as nothing in the sight of the Supreme Being; that he is a God of peace, who is greatly offended at the sight of cruel discord and innocent blood: we, I say, who are taught, that the higher he hath been pleased to exalt us, the greater and more extensive are

our

our duties; and that as we perform or neglect those duties, we become pleasing or despicable in the sight of that God, whose boundless providence extends even to the least insect; to whom an honest and religious beggar is an angel, and an unjust and impious monarch a devil.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS's entry into the world gives me reason to believe you will take a happy, and I hope a late, leave of it. I, in the course of nature, must go hence much sooner. God grant that we may meet again in a better life!

I am, &c.

Hellekis, August 25,

1752,

L E T-

LETTER XLIV.

ON voit assez communément, que les hommes se mettent à leur aise à l'égard de la vertu, et qu'ils s'imaginent que les petits écarts ne tirent point à conséquence. Cette licence m'a toujours parue délicate et hazardée, et je supplie Votre ALTESSE ROYALE de vouloir bien me dire, si elle croit que dans la vie on est absolument réduit à opter entre la vertu et le vice, ou bien, s'il y a un moyen état dans lequel on peut encore se concilier l'estime du public ?

Je me tiendrai heureux si j'ai rencontré l'avis de Votre ALTESSE ROYALE dans ces quatre vers.

L'homme marche, sans cesse, au bord du précipice,

Entre vice et vertu n'est aucun entrepot ;

C'est un roc escarpé ; pour le dire en un mot,

Où finit la vertu, là commence le vice.

Cette

Cette reflexion vous est, MONSEIGNEUR, d'autant plus importante, que le ton, que donnent les princes, est ordinairement suivi par le grand nombre de leurs sujets ; et, que pour les contenir dans un parfait devoir, il faut être soi même sans reproche.

LA fable suivante tend à constater cette vérité.

Note, THE remaining part of the letter is wrote in Swedish.

TRANSLATION of the preceding LETTER.

WE see, but too commonly, that mankind endeavour to make themselves easy with regard to strict virtue, by imagining that a small slip, now and then, can do no great harm : but this way of reasoning always appeared to me attended with some danger. I should be extremely glad if Your ROYAL
HIGHNESS

YOUNG PRINCE. 19

HIGHNESS would condescend to tell me, whether you think that, in our course of life, we are obliged to make an absolute choice between virtue and vice, or that there is an intermediate road, in which one may, at least, be assured of public esteem.

I SHOULD be quite happy if your opinion should happen to be contained in these four lines.

Man's road thro' life (if aught could make man
wife !)

Along the giddy breach of ruin lies.

No middle path the sceptic foul befriends :

The verge of vice begins where virtue ends.

This reflection is of so much more importance to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, as the example of princes is generally followed by most of their subjects ; who are with difficulty kept within
bounds,

bounds, if their sovereign himself be not without reproach. This truth will be confirmed by the following fable.

F A B L E.

A VIRGIN crab, about the age
 When girls are seldom sad or sage,
 Ran out a gadding o'er the strand,
 To see her mazes in the sand :
 And tho' it happen'd quite by chance,
 One wou'd have sworn she'd made a dance.
 ' Where now ? ' the sober mother cry'd,
 ' What, not a moment by my side ?
 ' The giddy slut ! see, I declare,
 ' She crawls an a—e ! Why, how you stare !
 ' Come, learn to go like other fish.
 ' What backward still ? Straight forward :—
 pish !
 ' Look here, look here,' the dam proceeded,
 ' (But wiser age is never heeded.)
 ' Now, take example from your mother,
 She crawl'd, but crawl'd just like the other :

For

For nature, spite of all her skill,
Still conquer'd : and will conquer still.

THIS fable shews us, how necessary it is that we ourselves should be able to perform those duties we expect from other men. A minister of the gospel, though he should speak like an angel, will make but little impression on the hearts of his flock, if his life be known to contradict his tongue. A youth, that would upbraid his brother with puerility, must not run from moral instruction to his play-things. It would be ridiculous in a dancing-master to bid me turn out my feet, whilst he himself walked like a goose. The father of a family, who expects decency from his servants, must himself be orderly and regular. A king—HUSH! (methinks I hear) A KING CAN DO NO WRONG. But I am bold enough to answer, HE CAN. As he is the highest, and consequently most visible, ob-

ject

ject of his people, he ought to be their best example. He may command his subjects; but he must obey the laws. A king would be happier than mortals are allowed to be, were he suffered to enjoy all the privileges of majesty, without its natural inconveniencies, of which, the more than common circumspection that ought always to precede the minutest of his actions, is not the least. Grandeur and restraint are the portion of crowned heads: less magnificence and more freedom is our inheritance. But what need of extending this subject? Do not your ROYAL PARENTS afford you the best example in the world? Can you form your christian, kingly, or social virtues upon better models; or copy magnanimity, aversion to flattery, and equitable judgment from better originals, than those to whom these virtues are peculiar: affection, and cheerful obedience (the greatest wealth and
hap-

YOUNG PRINCE. 23

happinefs of a fovereign) are their natural, and true confequence.

DEAR Sir ! let every object that furrounds you either animate to virtue, or create in you a deteftation of vice. Nature hath produced few things that may not be confidered in a moral light. I lately took a fecond view of the ftupendous work intended to render the Gothftröme navigable ; which, amongft many others, will be a lafting monument of his Prefent Majefty's reign. I could not help comparing this fream, in its prefent fituation, to virtue, which after having ftuggled through a thoufand falutary difficulties, flows peaceably on to the end of its courfe. It formerly bore a juft refemblance to the turbid irregularities of vice, overflowing all bounds, and throwing all things into confufion.

HEAVEN defend Your ROYAL HIGHNESS from every misfortune ! but, the great, for
their

their own security, must be reminded, that they are not exempt from them: yet, when, or in whatsoever shape, they come, you may be assured, that virtue and perseverance are sufficient to vanquish all difficulties; that, on the contrary, vice and impatience are the only means to render our misfortunes insupportable, and increase them beyond the hope of recovery.

I am, &c.

Leckoe, August 22,

1752.

LETTER XLV.

QUE ne puis-je faire participer Votre ALTESSE ROYALE à la joye qui m'a faisie en recevant la derniere lettre qu'elle m'a fait la grace de m'écrire! Conservez, MONSEIGNEUR, ce naturel charmant qui me pénètre et qui vous rend present à mes yeux: c'est le
pere

père des graces et l'esprit n'est que son frere batard.

RIEN n'est plus juste que la satisfaction que Votre ALTESSE ROYALE a recentie du retour du roi. Comme premier sujet, il lui convenoit de porter la parole. Nous autres campagnards, que la solitude separe de l'éclat des cours, nous sommes reduits à chommer ces fêtes avec moins de bruit, quoiqu' avec le même zèle et la même cordialité.

JE vois d'ici les dieux, les déesses, les bergers, les bergeres, les nymphes, et leur fléau les satires. Il n'y a qu'à s'imaginer les agré-
mens, la légèreté, les graces, la parure, le goût, et la perfection, pour être présent aux cadeaux que sa Majesté la Reine sçait ordonner, et que ceux qu'elle honnore de ses ordres savent exécuter ; mais au travers des ris et des plaisirs, je distingue, sur tout, le prince de la jeunesse, pour qui je donneroïis volontiers

ma vie et mon bien, fâché de n'être pas plus jeune et plus riche pour faire valoir d'avantage mon offrande. N'importe : les petits presens entretiennent l'amitié : c'est, MONSEIGNEUR, le nom que j'ose donner à vos bontés.

Si Votre ALTESSE ROYALE desire savoir mes occupations, elles ont d'abord pour refrain les vœux que je fais pour elle. Le reste du tems, je m'amuse à courir la province, et dans les entre-actes je me rencoigne dans mes bois, où je suis rarement seul ; car, quelque enthousiasmé que je sois des agrémens de la campagne, j'aime à jouir de la société, et après avoir bien savouré les douceurs de la retraite, je suis charmé de trouver à qui conter ma satisfaction.

Aimable solitude ! où mes sens rajeunis
Jouissent d'un repos que je ne puis décrire,

Que

YOUNG PRINCE. 27

Que vos jours sont serains ! charmantes sont vos
nuits ;

Mais il me faut avoir à qui pouvoir le dire.

C'est un privilege attaché à la condition de nous
autres particuliers, de pouvoir nous soustraire
au bruit de monde, et nous reposer dans les
foyers, après avoir paru sur le théâtre ; et
c'est peut être l'unique avantage que les princes
nous envient.

Les astres dans les cieux, tout brillans de lu-
miere,

Furent fait pour errer, au sortir du cahos :

De même sont les rois, ces astres de la terre,

Avec beaucoup d'éclat, ils n'ont point de repos,

Au reste, MONSEIGNEUR, je vous imite : la
promenade et les dissipations ne me font pas
oublier l'étude. Je lis beaucoup, et sur tout,

les soirs à la bougie. Cela affoiblit entièrement ma vue. Si j'en suis privé, j'aurai la consolation d'avoir acquis des lumieres en perdant les yeux, et ce pauvre aveugle aura toujours une langue et un cœur pour souhaiter que Votre ALTESSE ROYALE devienne un jour l'Oint du Seigneur, l'exemple des rois, l'amour des sujets, et les délices du monde.

C'EST avec le respect le plus profond, et j'ose dire, le plus tendre, que j'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

Hellekis, le 29 d'Aout, 1752.

TRANSLATION of the preceding LETTER.

WOULD it were in my power to communicate to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS part of the joy I felt at the receipt of your last letter! Continue, dearest PRINCE, your PLEASING NATURAL SIMPLICITY; it
 charms

YOUNG' PRINCE. 29

charms me beyond expression : it is the father of the Graces, and WIT is but its bastard brother.

NOTHING can be more amiable than the satisfaction you expressed at the KING's return ; and the part of speaker was entirely consistent with your rank, as FIRST SUBJECT. We country folks, who are separated, by solitude, from court-splendour, do not, however, leave these festivals uncelebrated : though it may not be with equal magnificence, we can boast of equal zeal and sincerity.

METHINKS I see, even at this distance, the gods and goddesses, the shepherds and shepherdesses, the nymphs and their tormenting satyrs. To be as it were present at the entertainments which her Majesty knows so well how to order, and those she honours with her commands, to execute, we need but paint to ourselves the gay assembly of pleasures, and

graces, with all their numerous train of attendants. But amidst the splendid crowd, I distinguish, above the rest, the charming PRINCE of youth, for whose service I would willingly offer up my life and all I am worth; —sorry that I happen to be so old, and no richer, that my offering might be of more value. No matter: even small presents keep alive the flame of friendship; for that is the name I presume to give Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's goodness.

IF you should ask how I spend my time? My vows to heaven for the well-being of my dear PRINCE mix with all my actions. When I am at leisure, I make excursions round the country. Between the acts, I retire into the midst of my woods, but seldom alone; for, rural enthusiast as I am, I love society: and when I have enjoyed the sweets of retirement, am charmed to find a friend to whom I can communicate my satisfaction.

De-

YOUNG PRINCE.

31

Delightful solitude ! wrapt in thy arms,
Each sense revives :—what tongue can speak
thy charms ?

Thy days and nights, how calm !—but what's
all this,

Without a friend, that I may tell my bliss ?

THE power of retiring from the noisy
world ; after having appeared upon the stage,
to hide ourselves behind the scenes ; are the
special privileges of us private men, and per-
haps the only advantage for which we are en-
vied by the great.

Yon planets, snatch'd from chaos and old
night :

Were doom'd to wander, when call'd forth to
light.

Thus shines the monarch of an earthly throne,
In painful splendor, to repose unknown.

B. 4

UPON

UPON the whole, I follow Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's example, in not neglecting my studies for the sake of amusements. I read a good deal, especially by candle-light. I know it weakens my sight considerably; but whenever I happen to be entirely deprived of it, I shall, at least, feel the satisfaction of having acquired some light in losing my eyes; and the poor blind man will always retain a heart and tongue to wish, that Your ROYAL HIGHNESS may, one day, become the Lord's anointed, an example to kings, the love of your subjects, and the delight of the world!

WITH the most profound and, I dare to say, the most tender respect, I have the honour to be

Your, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLVI.

* F A B L E.

OF old, three maids of near relation,
 Call'd Virtue, Genius, Reputation,
 (And though related, friends sincere,)
 Wou'd take a journey Lord knows where.
 Quoth Genius, ' Though we start together,
 ' Yet who can tell what wind or weather
 ' May come; what fortune may betide us,
 ' Or things may happen to divide us.'—
 ' True,' answer'd Reputation; ' thence,
 ' Before we take our journey hence,
 ' I should be glad to know the ground
 ' Where both my sisters may be found.'—
 ' Well,' saith dame Genius, ' as for me,
 ' Where ever you may chance to see
 ' Or piles of graceful symetry,

B 5

* Or

* This Fable is taken from LA MOTTE. The reader
 may find a good translation, or rather an imitation of it, in
 Mr. DODSLEY's Collection of Poems.

- Or living canvas, breathing marble,
- Or where the Muses sweetly warble,
- Conclude me there.'—Then Virtue said,
- If once you lose me, I'm afraid
- You'll find it hard to search me out;
- But seek me not at drum or rout :
- You'll rather find me pensive laid
- In some sequefter'd, silent shade.
- Yet if perchance, a place there be
- Where feeling wealth feeds poverty ;
- Where gen'rous friendship acts unbrib'd,
- And boldly owns the man proscrib'd ;
- Where Hymen treads the neck of lust ;
- Where ministers and kings are just,
- Ask for me there.'—' We comprehend,'
- Said Reputation : ' luck attend
- You both ; but as for me, good night,
- If e'er you trust me out of sight !—
- To guard me well be your endeavour ;
- If once I'm lost, I'm lost for ever.'

YOUNG PRINCE. 35

THIS Fable is not my own; but I should have thought it an honour to have been the author of it. Your ROYAL HIGHNESS hath often read it in French, and for variety's sake, may perhaps not be displeased to see it in our own language. It is aimed at people of all ranks. Those in inferior life have, in general, little satisfaction, or dependence, but in their good name: and the great, if once they sport away their reputation, are dishonoured to the latest posterity; universal contempt infallibly succeeds, and greatly augments the loss.

You, my dear SIR, from your early youth, have known the true value of a good name; which convinces me you will neglect nothing that may preserve and establish the character of a great and good prince.

A KING often loses his reputation without being aware of it. His courtiers continue

to bow as deep as ever. Few men have courage enough to tell him so disagreeable a truth: but posterity, with less fear or delicacy, will not fail to spread wide the faithful annals which the adulation of his own time was afraid to open. I hope Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's character will be such, that our living historians may deliver it to future ages without the fear of its being altered, by them, in the least tittle. May you never be numbered among those princes whose life hath no other merit in history than that of being a foil to the names that have gone before, and those that succeed them!

I am, &c.

Hellekis, August 29,

1752.

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

A CERTAIN courtier, and his servant, had, one day, the satisfaction to save the life of a poor peasant, who, in crossing the ice, had the misfortune to break in. The gentleman thought a slight reprimand might not be improper; and, accordingly, expressed his surprize, that so old a man should not have more prudence than to venture himself where the danger was so apparent. ‘ Pray, ‘ Sir, answered the peasant, do not you courtiers walk, the whole year round, on a much ‘ more dangerous ice than this? If I happen ‘ to break-in, I have, at least, a chance to ‘ get out again; and then I creep back to my ‘ little hut, and soon forget my disaster: but ‘ if you once break through the thin ice of ‘ fortune, you are sure to struggle in the hole ‘ to the end of your life. Your friends, in-

‘ steady

‘stead of reaching a hand to assist you, make it wider, and every passenger laughs at your misfortune.’ I, being a spectator to what happened, expected the gentleman would have given him a smart reply, and that a quarrel would have ensued: but the courtier blushed, was silent, and went his way.

I WAS not entirely of the clown’s opinion; though I own he did not judge amiss, where kings are driven about with every wind; but I am convinced there are princes whose favour has a rock for its foundation; nor are all subjects so weak as not to bear unmerited disgrace with magnanimity. A good conscience, and a mind at rest, frequently make the man disgraced, happier than his successor.

MAY your feeling heart be able to bleed for the man from whom you are obliged to withdraw your protection! an unsteady prince makes all his subjects timorous. One takes
example

YOUNG PRINCE. 39

example at another's fall, till, at last, nobody will approach the sun whose scorching beams consume all before it. You will do well to chuse deliberately, and not without proof; but, your choice once made, let nothing shake your constancy: otherwise, you will be sure to acquire only self-interested and ambitious servants, who, like gamesters, commit their fortune to the hazard of a die. With unalterable veneration I have the honour to be,

Your, &c.

Gothala, Sept. 5.

1752.

L E T.

LETTER XLVIII.

FABLE.

IT happen'd on a certain day,
 (On what account, we cannot say)
 A flock of birds of various feather,
 In Jovial mood, were met together.
 One whistl'd, and another sung;
 A third, with pliant mimic tongue,
 Whilst some their aukward capers cut,
 Took off the rest, and play'd the Foot.
 In short, the riot was as great
 As if a hundred Bucks were met.
 The Dove alone in silence sat,
 Nor join'd the dance, nor join'd the chat:
 Which when the merry Pie observ'd?
 She cry'd aloud, ' Why so reserv'd?
 ' The spleen, I warrant;—you're in love?'
 ' Why so?' reply'd the gentle dove.

* Does

YOUNG PRINCE. 41

- Does mirth consist in noise and riot ?
- Have I the spleen because I'm quiet ?
- Go, chatt'ring friend, you must excuse me,
- And let your monkey tricks amuse me.
- To-morrow's sun (I know your mirth)
- Will see your spirits sunk to earth ;
- Whilst I, to-morrow, still shall be
- Blest in my own serenity.'

HEAVEN forbid that I should dissuade Your ROYAL HIGHNESS from being chearful ! On the contrary, it is what I ever approved. I myself have been, perhaps, rather too much so, till age and care have mingled my wine with water, and converted my joy into contentment. A chearful prince is an encouragement to his people, and a chearful people are seldom vicious. Innocent amusements may be allowed the subject, without the least fear of bad consequences. A chearful disposition is the best gift that children can receive from
their

their parents. My design was only to shew the difference between riot and satisfaction. The most discontented man in the world may have certain intervals of mirth, but his joy is of short duration ; whilst real contentment is ever fixed, and remains with its possessor.

THE felicity of a virtuous man lies within his own breast. We are not to think him less satisfied, because he is less noisy, than his neighbour ; whose loud laughter is, frequently rather the effect of a ridiculous habit, than of inward joy.

Dans le rire évitez ces surprenans éclats :

Du sage, on voit le rire, et on ne l'entend pas.

• Horse-laughter, say you ? good : I'll not sit near him ;

We see a wise man laugh, but seldom hear him.

HEAVEN

• Note, LET not the English reader mistake this line for a translation of the French.

YOUNG PRINCE. 43

HEAVEN blefs Your ROYAL HIGHNESS
with a constant chearful heart ! It can never
be unacceptable to that good Being, who
hath showered down his blessings with so
liberal a hand, and given you so much reason
to be happy ; may that happiness have its
source in your own breast ! and it will in-
fallibly diverge its rays to all around you.

Voulez vous, à coup sur, être content d'autrui ?

Tachez, avec raison, de l'être de vous même.

If thou wou'dst be content with others, first

With thy own deeds be justly satisfied.

For my part, my greatest felicity on earth
is to have lived as I will die,

Your, &c.

Clæstorp, Sept. 12,

1754.

LET.

LETTER XLIX.

MOST men are born with a taste or passion for some peculiar object: but it appears more obviously in princes, as they are best able to indulge it. Some are fond of paintings, some of medals, some of books, and others of natural curiosities. Were I equal to the design, I would certainly make a collection of HONEST MEN; but it is above the power of a private man, and only fit for the cabinet of a king. Beside, it would require the skill of a perfect connoisseur; for it is a kind of ware frequently counterfeited with great art.

WHAT an infinite satisfaction, and pleasing variety, would it afford, to be possessed of men of all complexions, figures, and occupations, even to the very lowest rank of mortals! If, as in other collections, they were to

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be bought according to their real value, I believe we should find many a great man, like some gold and silver medals, worth but a small sum, and many a poor vassal, like some brass ones, of great price: for virtue is not very delicate in the choice of her habitation; she is often satisfied with a thatched roof over her head.

WHAT thinks Your ROYAL HIGHNESS of such an assembly? Would it not be a singular happiness to see one's self surrounded with sincerity, honesty, and honour? But I am of opinion that the prince, who would make such a collection, must be himself the chief piece in the cabinet; otherwise there would be great reason to doubt of his ability in chusing. I should have no fear but that the desire of being admitted would make all the world grow honest, our volumes of law become waste paper, and our judges idle
men :

men: perhaps also some sort of learning would lose its utility.

THE various passions of mankind are, alas! but too evidently the sources of almost an universal deluge of evil; but I am, by no means, of that sect who believe it a necessary cement of society. Be this as it will, Your ROYAL HIGHNESS may safely begin your collection without the least fear of its growing too numerous, any more than the entire extinction of the supposed necessary sparks of vice.

WE have a common proverb which says, 'Tell me his companions, and I shall know the man.' Proverbs do not concern the common people only. Kings and princes have often reason to blush at the morality they contain; and ought, in prudence, not to despise them, lest men should imagine they had not read the bible, in which, we find,

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YOUNG PRINCE. 47

the very wisest of kings used this energetic method of writing.

MANKIND have undoubtedly a right to judge of our morals by those of our companions. He that associates with men of loose principles will, deservedly, be thought little better than his company, be his own actions, in reality, ever so blameless. I confess there are some cases in which a private subject is obliged to bear with the vices of particular men: I mean our own relations, or those of our friends. Common civility will also engage us to receive visits from, and converse with, people whose dispositions are as opposite to ours, as fire is to water. In short our situation in life, and the laws of neighbourhood, frequently leave us not at liberty in the choice of our acquaintance: therefore this proverb cannot be applied to private men, without some exceptions; but a king has the power

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of a free choice among all his subjects; and, for that reason, mankind will infallibly judge of his sense, and principles, by the honesty and abilities of those whom he honours with his confidence, and employs in affairs of importance. If the people have a bad opinion of his ministers, their best endeavours will fall short of the end proposed. If justice be not impartially administered, the people grow licentious, and the reproach will fall upon the king. If the generals of his army be not expeditious, prudent, and resolute, his troops behave ill, and he will bear the blame.

You, my dear SIR, are the joy and hope of our kingdom: endeavour, therefore, sometimes to correct and improve your judgment. All wise men apply themselves to some peculiar study: that of a prince, is the KNOWLEDGE OF MANKIND.

THOUGH

THOUGH we do not build with our own hands, yet when the house is finished we are answerable for every fault that appears either in the design or execution. When Your ROYAL HIGHNESS advances a little further into the spacious field of history, you will find innumerable instances, where posterity have formed their judgment of princes, not so much from their own actions, as from those of the instruments of their power.

ONE of the best rules to direct you in your choice, is, to prefer such men as are most universally esteemed: you will reap the praise, and your kingdom will be happy. But if, on the contrary, you suffer men of ill fame to assume the helm, the commander, though ever so skilful, will be severely censured for committing the management of his ship to ignorant or treacherous seamen, and those who have intrusted him with their merchan-

dize, will live in continual apprehension of the consequence.

My design is not, by any means, to deprive the least subject of his sovereign's favour; but a king may be extremely mild and humane, without intrusting the welfare of his people to dishonest or unexperienced men.

MY dearest PRINCE! I lay my heart open to your severest examination. Age and business have indeed impaired my strength and intellects; but this heart of mine, old as it is, burns still with true zeal for my king and country; and which, in spite of time or fortune, nothing but the grave shall extinguish. I do not envy those, who surpass me in youth and vivacity, the honour of their seats near the king, and in his council. It is enough for me, that my grey head be counted among those who have served his majesty, and their

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YOUNG PRINCE. 51

country, faithfully; and that I be allowed the comfort of reposing my weary limbs under the shadow of his wings who will, one day, be the chief ornament and happiness of Sweden.

I am, &c.

Æckeröe, Sept. 20,

1752.

LETTER L.

A FEW days more, and my rural pleasures are at an end. On the one hand, I confess the time will not seem tedious, and on the other, that I am not sorry to return to Stockholm: though this my island of repose affords me the bounties of the creation in much greater perfection than I can expect to find them in the city; where the feet of moving crowds tread away the verdant face of nature; where the water is polluted, the air un-

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wholesome,

wholesome, and the sun's beams are generally excluded.

Is it then the approach of winter that calls me to town? No: all seasons are winter to an old man. Is it for the sake of dancing at a ball? I thank God that I am able to walk. Is it in search of contentment? How unfortunate should I be, if I did not carry that along with me! Do I hunt after fine speeches and low bows? Not I indeed: the first are light and airy food, and I may thank the latter for my present stiff-back. Is it then the bright eyes of our court ladies? This might be the case, if my weak ones were able to bear much fun. Do I expect preferment? I have never yet fought any thing but a good name. In the favour of the royal family I am already happy; but that is so universally extended, that I might hope for it in the most obscure retirement. Preferment I look for in the grave only.

YOUNG PRINCE. 53

only. Have I a mind to shew my fine
cloaths? This might, with more probability,
be supposed of a bride, than an old man; the
chief ornament of whose apparel should be its
decency. Do I seek large companies? No?
these are frequently troublesome. I value the
conversation of a single friend more than an
acquaintance with half the world. Is it pro-
tection? I am not conscious of a crime, and
have therefore no need of it. I perhaps want
money? He that is content hath always
enough: I can set bounds to my desires, and
am therefore rich. Is it love? If this were
the case, I should deserve to be heartily
laughed at: no, I have burnt my fingers in
my younger days, and know the gay, the flut-
tering, the airy sex too well. Virtue is my
sole mistress: and every individual fair that
worships her hath, in some measure, an as-
cendent over me: but I am no more affected

with the beauty of a woman without virtue, than I am tempted by the fair outside of an apple which I know to be worm-eaten. Am I fond of a court-life? I honour the court, but I hate its snares. What then can be my inducement? It is that kind of pleasure which, after a cold night, men feel at the chearing return of the sun. It is, in a word, the desire of seeing my dear PRINCE, and the pleasure of guiding his early steps in the path that leads to the nation's welfare, and to the temple of honour.

My trust is indeed very great; but I have reason to thank and praise Your ROYAL HIGHNESS who is pleased to make my burden light. Your own disposition is my best assistant: it not only enables me to do my duty, but assures to me the continuance of your favour, which otherwise I might be in some danger of losing, as I shall ever prefer truth to all that can possibly

sibly be gained by flattery. Your happiness, together with that of the nation, are bound upon my conscience.

LEWIS the fourteenth intrusted the DAUPHIN's education to the duke of MONTAUSIER; who, on being told by a well meaning friend, that his bold sincerity might easily disgust the prince, and ruin all his hopes of future fortune, answered, ' If the DAUPHIN continue to
' think nobly, he will love me for my sin-
' cerity; and if, on the contrary, he should
' prove ungrateful, God forbid that I should
' ever seek the favour of a prince, capable of
' hating me without cause.'

I AM bold enough to boast of the same sentiment, with much inferior abilities, and less fortune; but I will purchase nothing on earth at the expence of my duty, which bids me preserve the apple of our nation's eye, at all events.

Ciel, conserve ce PRINCE à qui j'offre ma vie !
 Puisque la Providence à mes soins le confie,
 Sans relache, d'un roi, je lui dis le devoir :
 Assez d'autres, sans moi, lui diront son pouvoir.

Bless, heaven! the PRINCE thou to my care
 didst give!

For whom I'd die, for whom I'm glad to live !
 My tongue shall urge his duty ev'ry hour ;—
 He'll ne'er want tongues to tell him of his
 power.

I HAVE reason to think myself much happier than the duke of MONTAUSIER, who seems to have had some doubt of his success: but, as for me, I am confident Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will continue the same glorious disposition which I have so earnestly sought, found, and endeavoured to strengthen, in your tender heart; and which assures me that you will
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YOUNG PRINCE. 57

be a christian, without hypocrisy ; a sovereign, without pride ; a judge without partiality ; an heroë, without being blood-thirsty ; a conqueror, without tyranny ; in success generous, in misfortune firm, in joy moderate ; even in your amusements manly ; affable, to all men ; cautious but not irresolute ; determinate without obstinacy ; generous without extravagance ; to vice inflexible ; great without pomp ; chearful but not licentious ; your people's friend, your people's joy, your people's pride, your people's hope, your people's blessing, your people's protection.

BEFORE I bid a last farewell to the world and its vanities, I hope, and believe, it will be in my power, in conformity to the picture I have drawn, to say with confidence, to my fellow subjects, There is the PRINCE that was committed to my care ! there is the treasure that I have watched, which hath lost nothing

of its value! there is the dear branch that hath not degenerated from its noble stock! there is the ROYAL YOUTH that will make a worthy king! Now let the earth receive its due! My bones will rest in peace; and on my grave shall be wrote, the unalterable veneration with which I lived and died

Your, &c.

Aekeroe, Sept, 28,

1752.

LETTER LI.

AS I shall, in a few days, have the pleasure to see Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, it might perhaps be expected that I should now close our correspondence; but I, who have your image impressed upon my heart, am apt to believe that I cannot give you too frequent proofs of my affectionate zeal, and

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constant remembrance. With what satisfaction shall I meet death, if, till the day it comes, I do but continue blessed with the power of preparing you for a long and happy life! in the pursuit of which you must continue the road of morality, and take religion for your guide.

In my yesterday's journey from Æckeroe, I observed a very visible parhelium, or second sun; but shall reserve the explanation of this and several other natural phænomena, with their various effects on the weather, to another time. My present endeavour shall be to make a moral use of this double sun, and as it was an appearance in the heavens, I will lay the scene of the following fable there.

FABLE.

FABLE.

ATWINKLING Star approach'd the Sun,
And to the monarch thus begun :

- Great sovereign of these argent fields !
- To whose bright beams all lustre yields,
- Excuse me, if I seem surpriz'd
- To see presumption unchastiz'd ;
- If I could shine as bright as thee,
- No other thing should glow but me.
- Didst thou observe yon globe, that shone
- Thy rival, proud Parhelion ?
- Why dost thou suffer, there below,
- The pool to glimmer, worm to glow ?
- Were I as thou, I'd shew my power,
- And all these apes of light devour.'
- THY narrow soul, and foolish pride,
- Deserve contempt,' the sun reply'd.
- Yon second sun, however bright,
- Receives from me his borrow'd light.
- And tho' a thousand beings shine,
- Their glory but redoubles mine.

This.

YOUNG PRINCE. 61

This, my dear SIR, is the language of conscious worth; which, so far from regarding these secondary lights with envy, considers them as so many reflections of his own lustre: whilst, on the contrary, those who feel their own want of merit are ever careful to stifle the least spark of it in others, lest the disagreeable contrast should set their own false glitter in a true light.

A FEW years more, and Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will be able to prove mankind by this touchstone. He that looks on the merit of other men with a jealous eye, hath himself, most probably, no genuine worth to boast of: but he who is really in love with virtue, and rejoices to see her rewarded, will stand the test without hazard, and surely deserves your protection.

It is the duty and interest of a king to distinguish and reward the deserving: for how
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can he expect to have great men in his service, if his ridiculous envy should refuse them the honours due to their character? Kings are powerful; but all their power is not sufficient to endow whom they please with real merit. They may, indeed, raise a worthless favourite to the very pinnacle of honour; but the world will soon distinguish the tinsel glitter of high rank from the genuine lustre of desert.

THERE was a time, even with the Romans, when the more brave, the more virtuous, the more eloquent, the more experienced, and the more a man was beloved by the people, the greater was his reason to dread the sword of a tyrannic emperor: SENECA was condemned to die, and SPORUS allowed to live. But this was not always the case: AUGUSTUS honoured virtue even in his enemies, and pardoned CINNA's treachery, in consideration of his virtues.

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YOUNG PRINCE. 63

ENDEAVOUR, my dear SIR, to acquire a lustre of your own; but do not imagine that your high birth will secure you against competition. When honour is contended for, the prize is not given to him who sits the highest, but to him that shines the brightest. Let virtue, wisdom, courage, and affability determine all your actions, and you will infallibly become the bright northern star by which other kings will direct their course. You may then suffer a thousand luminous vapours, or shining worms, without the least cause of jealousy: they may awake our attention for a time, but can have no effect on your primary and permanent light. The whole world, but especially these northern nations, are impatient to observe the new star just rising above the horizon. You will soon attain an altitude fit for observation, which will

will enable us to determine your true degree of magnitude and lustre.

I AM confident Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will behave so as to confirm the hopes of every beholder, and satisfy the ardent wishes of

Your, &c.

Nykiæping, October 1,

1752.

LETTER LII.

THAT I may discharge my duty at all times, and in all places, to the utmost of my power, I must beg Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's leave to revive our correspondence. If it should have no other effect, it will, at least, convince you of my ardent and invariable desire to be of service to you.

MERE reading is, in itself, of no use, unless we read with an eye to our own and other

men.

YOUNG PRINCE. 65

mens improvement. The design of moral learning, which was your first study, is, as it were, to new-mould our nature, to sow the seeds of virtue in our hearts, and give us a bias towards great and good actions.

THERE are two different roads that lead to the temple of Honour: one of which is extremely rugged and dangerous. Those that follow it are seldom scrupulous as to the means by which they help themselves forward. If they happen to arrive safe, we are astonished at their intrepidity, and allow them all the merit of their success: but if they fail in the attempt, our surprize ceases, their reputation falls with them, and they are branded with folly for having pursued an unbeaten path.

THE other way is a very plain one; and tho' it may not be entirely free from difficulty, yet, as we travel a common road, without concealing our design, all our companions,

nions are concerned for the common safety. Honest men, in the same pursuit of honour, are mutual assistants. The fall of one is a bad omen to the other. If we chance to die upon the road, we are, however, sure to be buried in the temple for which we were bound, and to have an honourable monument erected to our memory.

It is not enough, that we have reached the pinnacle of grandeur: the curious world will be sure to ask by what means we came thither. Our own actions are the only foundation that will support the mighty fabrick. Without these we tremble, and grow giddy, when we look down from the top of the baseless pile on which we stand. By actions I do not only mean exploits of war. Those, when attempted without the call of necessity, give us but too often terrifying examples of ambitious rashness in the builder, and leave

YOUNG PRINCE. 67

us nothing but the proud ruins of broken monuments. Mild government, proportionate rewards, just punishments, a fix'd confidence in the world's supreme Governor, and equanimity in good or ill fortune, are the adamantine columns which must support a king's fame, if he wishes it to be immortal.

BUT Your ROYAL HIGHNESS needs not believe me on my bare word. Those volumes of universal history that engross your present attention will tell you the same thing. May these darkening eyes never behold Sweden's hope, the PRINCE of Sweden's youth, err from the plain and open road to honour! If you will but compare the fate of such as have proceeded cautiously and honourably, with that of those who have rashly pursued the end without any regard to the means, you will find a hundred of the first for one of the latter,

latter, that attained the happiness which they fought.

THE study of history will teach you the right application of the virtuous precepts you have already learnt. By the prosperous or unfortunate attempts of others, it points out to us that which we ought to imitate, and that which we must shun. It shews us in what manner private and public good are allied: that we must not only be virtuous, but that sense and knowledge are required to put our good designs in execution. Mere chronology, the study of names and pedigrees, is an useless burden to the memory, from which many a pedant, after much wrangling, hath reaped no better fruit than rancour and uncertainty: so that this is not the proper use of history. I believe it will more justly be found to consist in the following particulars.

FIRST,

FIRST, we are taught, by history, the various forms of government that have existed ever since our account of time. These Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will find to have differed in compliance with the manners and customs of each people; but I should be glad to know if you have found any one constitution defective, when those who had the chief management were wise and good men? Were we mortals naturally pious, peaceable, and just, so as to deserve each others confidence, there would be no need either of government or laws; but mankind's general depravity hath made them, alas! too necessary for the mutual security of prince and people, against each other. Yet, I confess, that unwholesome laws have often made bad times worse. A good man will behave so as to make laws seem useless: he will be virtuous for virtue's sake, and obey the statutes of his country not thro'

fear of punishment, but from inclination. A prince blest with the universal love of his subjects, must regard those laws which circumscribe his power, as not made for him, but with an eye to some succeeding reign; as a necessary precaution against future uncertainty; as a shield held by prudence over the people's happiness, which, it was thought, could not, without danger, be exposed to the caprice of princes yet unborn. A king, who hath a reasonable tenderness for his people, cannot but rejoice to see them secured against every possible evil. He will regard the laws in the same light wherein every private, honest man regards them. So long as he remains honest, they were not made for him; but he will, nevertheless, think them necessary, because all men are not equally good; and, even on his own account, he will look upon them

as

as a bulwark in defence of human weakness, against the surprizes of temptation.

WE are not to satisfy ourselves with merely learning from history that all states are liable to revolutions. We must diligently pry into the causes of their decline or total extinction. In the course of our enquiry, we shall often find that the most astonishing events have taken their rise from very trifling causes, which teaches us carefully to avoid even the most seeming insignificant slips in our conduct, since a nation's ruin may prove the final consequence. How many great men have undermin'd their own monument by a single imprudent action!

WHAT king can, without trembling, read the history of those monarchs who, having been adored during their lives, were no sooner dead, than their characters were stript of the bright veil which fear and flattery had thrown

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over them, and exposed in their naked deformity. Some princes, even for their liberality, have been ranked among weak men and tyrants; for to distribute favours indiscriminately is a weakness, and to reward bad men is the greatest tyranny. We err if we imagine the names of kings to be above the power of human judgment. History will infallibly become their accuser, and posterity their just tribunal. They who despise her laws, may be compared to the hardened criminal that audaciously stares his judge in the face, and hears an ignominious sentence without confusion.

WE learn from history, that high birth is not alone sufficient to make men great and useful in the world; that, on the contrary, if we are not careful to support our natural dignity, by an honourable means, it becomes an additional reproach. History is also an encouragement

couragement to men of low extraction, by shewing them that the temple of honour is open to all mankind : that they were not created more for their sovereign's advantage, than he for theirs ; and that the wealth of a king is the opulence of his subjects.

WE are not only to learn from history, that certain battles were won ; but, by what means. To know the name of a village near which the armies met, or the generals who commanded the right or left wing, were a very useless science, if we do not, at the same time, endeavour to see in what manner each commander turned his situation, or other circumstances, to advantage. He that burdens his memory with mere names, and dates, reads to no purpose. He only can be said to read with utility, who compares the examples of antiquity with his own times, and knows how to apply them on proper occasions ; but

not without prudently recollecting, that, in matters of policy, no two situations were ever exactly alike.

HISTORY may be also considered, as a monitor reminding every subject of his natural duty to his sovereign, as to him who bears the chief weight of the nation : it shews us the necessity of obedience to the laws, a religious observance of our oaths and promises, of a cheerful contribution for the public safety, of being unanimous among ourselves, and of making the inseparable felicity of our king and country the principal object of our vows ; for the annals of our fore-fathers shew us, that, whenever these duties began to languish, the constitution shook, and soon after fell to ruin.

I CANNOT conclude without begging of Your ROYAL HIGHNESS to honour me, during my few months absence, at least

once

YOUNG PRINCE. 75

once a week, with an account of your progress in this study. It will probably enable me to make my letters more agreeable ; for we are generally best pleased to be entertained on those subjects with which we are immediately conversant. I know you will not want instruction from those that are with you ; but that is no reason why, in my absence, I should be entirely inactive. It would be inconsistent with my zeal for the king's service, and my own insatiable desire to convince Your ROYAL HIGHNESS how absolutely I am,

Your, &c.

Akeroe, May 31,

1753.

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ANSWER

ANSWER to the preceding
LETTER.

My dear TESS,

I THANK you for both the letters which you have been so good as to write to me. They gave me much pleasure ; and as my TESS desires me to tell him what progress I have made in history ; so it is my design to acquaint him, that I have got as far as the first Punic war. So far, I have been most taken with CORIOLANUS, CAMILLUS, APPIUS CLAUDIUS, FABRICIUS, and PYRRHUS.

CORIOLANUS might have passed for a virtuous man, if his pride had not made him revenge himself upon his country, because they did not reward his merit, though he had done no more than his duty. CAMILLUS, on the contrary, though his fellow-countrymen
had

YOUNG PRINCE. 77

had behaved unthankfully, as soon as Rome wanted his assistance, forgot all that had passed, and shewed his duty to his native country. APPIUS, to advance himself, acted against the laws, and so was the cause of his own ruin. FABRICIUS shewed his virtue in refusing to accept the riches which PYRRHUS offered him, and he behaved so nobly to his enemies, that he would not conquer them by any treacherous means. PYRRHUS gained a great name by his experience in war; but his vast ambition put an end to his fortune: this makes me believe that too much ambition can bring nothing but misfortunes.

PRAY, my TESS, remember me to your dear lady, and I assure you that I shall always be,

Dear TESS,

Your constant friend,

GUSTAVE.

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LET.

LETTER LIII.

THE house, which I have begun to build, rises with less expedition than my advanced age seems to require ; but those that live long must necessarily plant, build, and repair for those that come after them. The wise dispensation of Providence is no less visible in this, than in all other things. Were we made acquainted with the hour of our death, I am afraid our posterity would inherit little more than tottering mansions, and acres over-grown with weeds ; but the hope, the oft-deceitful hope, of living to reap the fruit of our labour, persuades us to build houses that we may probably scarce live to see roofed in, or from which we must certainly depart in a short time.

THESE reflections may be considered, rather as natural to me, in my present situation, than

than the proper subject of a letter to a PRINCE whose life is yet dawning, and whose days, if Sweden's universal prayer be heard, will be long in the land.

SOLITUDE being the mother of contemplation, I have had several, perhaps not quite useless, ideas, occasioned by the nature of my present employment. Amongst others, I could not help thinking, what an infinite care and trouble must necessarily attend the management of a whole kingdom, when sixty square yards of ground afford me so much employment. Though my sphere of action be but small, it is abundantly sufficient to convince me, that the master's presence is indispensibly necessary, if the fabrick is intended to be well finished and durable. Yet, I find that all his care will avail but little, without skilful and diligent workmen. I myself am not entirely ignorant in the science of building:

but there are a hundred little arts, required in the execution, that practice hath made quite familiar to those mechanicks, but with which I am unacquainted. For this reason I consult, and endeavour to employ, men of experience; and rather than part with them for a trifle, I am glad to increase their wages, and reward their diligence. If any one has the misfortune, whilst in my service, to be disabled by accident, I make it my duty to give him a subsistence to the end of his life.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS must allow me to compare my own private conduct, as a builder, to that of a king. Every faculty of his soul should be constantly at work. He must not only design his own plan, but see it carefully executed: for which purpose he will make choice of able and experienced workmen, hear their advice, use their knowledge, reward their honesty, support their spirits, and

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not leave them comfortless when, after having passed their noon of life in his service, they would enjoy the evening of their days in peace.

THE English watchmakers do not finish every individual part of their work with their own hands: this would take up too much of that time which is better employed in composing and regulating the whole.

A KING may be said to have, under his eye, the time-piece of the nation. It is a machine so contrived as only to shew the number of hours in each day which he employs for the good of his people. At his death, the watch stops, and shews to posterity, at one view, the quantity of time it has run off during his whole life.

IT may perhaps seem strange and inexcusable to some people, that I should apply such low comparisons, to the great; but it will not

appear so to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, who, in the fables, both ancient and modern, which you have read with so much pleasure and attention, have seen the œconomy of brutes proposed to people of the first distinction, by way of example. To you it will not seem wonderful, that I should compare the actions of rational creatures with each other. If I am allowed to say of a king, that he governs the nation like a good pilot, is as tired as a labourer, or cold as a beggar; I may certainly, without fear of offence, compare him to all honest men; especially those of a reputable vocation.

THE French have an odd phrase in their language, namely, *sans comparaison*, which, used in parenthesis, allows them to make what comparisons they please: but as I cannot well conceive what they mean by making comparisons without comparison, I think it hardly worth while to introduce this Gallicism
into

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into our tongue. Be it as it will, I am sure my well-known intention will excuse me to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, whose felicity will be the last request to heaven of,

Dearest PRINCE,

Your, &c.

Æckeroe, June 6,

1753.

LETTER LIV.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS hath had a governor many years, but perhaps without ever once having had leisure to enquire into the meaning of his title, or extent of his duty. We derive our word governor from the French gouverneur, which originally signified a pilot, or he that stands at the helm of a ship, and whose business

it

it is to bring those, who have intrusted him with their lives, safe to land.

ONE part of a governor's duty is to preserve the health of his pupil, that his strength of body may increase with his years, and his life be extended to its greatest possible length. It is in compliance with this duty that I am now and then obliged to thwart your inclinations; which, though it should offend you at present, I flatter myself you will live to pardon. But to preserve your health, and prolong your life is not, alone, sufficient. A governor must be equally assiduous to render life happy: but real happiness can, by no possibility, grow from any root, except that of religion, which must, therefore, be carefully planted in the heart.

THE first thing we should learn, when we quit the cradle, is, to whom we are indebted for our being; that we are no less than the work of the Almighty. We then, most naturally,

YOUNG PRINCE. 35

turally, ask in what manner we are to express our gratitude, to worship, and obey him. I cannot forbear acknowledging that Your ROYAL HIGHNESS hath most chearfully fulfilled these principal duties; and I verily believe that Sweden may thank your tender voice for many of the blessings she now enjoys.

AFTER we have imbibed a true knowledge and fear of our Creator, the natural depravity of our hearts requires the immediate assistance of morality, which ought to tread upon the heels of faith: but to gain our early affections, it is necessary she should make her first appearance in her very gayest apparel. Tales, fables, similes, and the like, are commonly the ornaments in which she attracts our first attention; and as the first impressions are generally the strongest, this agreeable dress may, not without reason, be supposed,

posed, to make us, ever after, prejudiced in her favour. It is with morality as with a chearful sensible friend: we like him first for his agreeable qualities, and afterwards, for his solid virtues. Morality, in like manner, keeps pace with our age: whilst we are young and gay, she is all alacrity; but gradually assumes a face of gravity as we grow old and serious.

HISTORY is our next study. A wise man will use all his endeavours to be well acquainted with the house he is to inhabit. He will enquire into the nature and situation of the building, the character and œconomy of his predecessors. A comedian, who is ambitious to shine in his profession, must be well acquainted with the history of the stage: he must inform himself in what manner other actors have played, and by what means they gained applause. What is man, but a player?

and

and the world but a theatre? on which no one will appear who hath not had a predecessor in the same character, whose example may be of service to him.

RELIGION, morality, and history, are the first and most important branches of education: but as the minds of youth require frequent relaxation, and are capable of receiving great variety of impressions, it is thought necessary to interrupt our serious studies with more trivial learning and bodily exercise, part of which is intended to give us a certain politeness of behaviour required in the society with our fellow creatures, and part, to divest us of our natural stiffness, and teach us the graceful use of our limbs.

THUS far the general duties of a governor; who, in leaving his pupil thus instructed, certainly deserves praise and gratitude. But this is far from being the extent of his duty who is intrusted

intrusted with the education of a royal prince. Where another's duty ceases, his may properly be said to begin. When he hath taught the high-born youth to be a man, he must then instruct him how to govern mankind.

THE common duties of society are infinitely less extensive than those of a sovereign prince; whose governor is not only, in some measure, answerable for the peculiar virtues of his royal charge, but for the future felicity of nations, and sometimes of the whole world. A king hath often the fate of more than one nation in his power. Peace or war, happiness or misery to whole regions are frequently the result of his councils. But the more, and greater the virtues are that should adorn a throne, the more subtle and stubborn are the vices which surround it. A man of common rank is sure to meet with many things in life to humble him. He will find more men ready to reproach

YOUNG PRINCE. 39

reproach him with his faults, than to excuse and encourage them. But a young prince who, from his cradle, lives in a constant circle of flattery, falls much more easily into the vice of pride; a vice that infallibly casts a cloud over all his virtues.

OTHER children are charged with their own vices; but, if those of a prince be in question, the whole weight falls upon his governor: and he who was thought the happiest of mortals, is often condemned to spend the sad remainder of his days in sorrow, to see that all his care, his trouble, his late and early watchings have been employed to no effect.

HONOUR is not to him that plants and waters, but to him that giveth the increase. This good Being hath been pleased to send so ample a blessing on the honest endeavours of those who have been appointed to watch
over

over your early days, that we are without fear of reproach. You, my dear SIR, are now in the spring of your life. For heaven's sake, be careful of your spotless and tender heart! that the approaching summer of manhood may ripen the precious fruit which the present promising blossom gives us reason to expect.

WE have four different judgments to look for: first, that of their Majesties, whose own bright example will render us more severely answerable. Secondly, that of the nation; from which I expect more honour than I have deserved: for he that is bless'd with a rich soil, needs employ but little pains and tillage. The third, and most competent judge will be **YOUR ROYAL SELF.** You, next to heaven, are best acquainted with my heart. You, alone, can bear me witness, how often, and how earnestly,

earnestly, I have dared to admonish you in our private hours. You best know whether I have ever sown the least seed of evil in your heart. If I have done this, may the poisonous juice of the fruit it bears destroy my own soul! You are least ignorant in what degree my own life hath been blameless; and whether, by my example, you have ever been tempted to do ill. I, therefore, cheerfully submit myself to your severest examination, and will receive your judgment as a glorious reward for my past services. The fourth and last tribunal is that of the Omnipotent: where suffering innocence may expect to hear the unjust decrees of men repealed. I dare not call upon his justice; for I am but a man. I appeal to his infinite mercy, which I beseech him to send down upon my ROYAL PUPIL, that he may become the token of an everlasting

ing covenant between his people and their
God!

I am, &c.

Leckoe, June 13,

1753.

ANSWER to the preceding
LETTER.

My dear TESS,

THE last letter which you wrote to me,
was very agreeable to me; and I fin-
cerely thank my dear TESS for it. The duty
of a governor to his pupil, which you wrote
about, reminds me of the duty of a pupil to
his governor; which is, to love him, to ac-
knowledge his goodness, and to obey him.
I assure you, my dear TESS, I will neglect

none

none of these duties, because I love you, and shall always be,

Dear TESS,

Your faithful friend,

GUSTAVE.

LETTER LV.

I WAS honoured with Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's charming letter of the 11th of this month, on my journey to Trollhætta, where my office obliged me to attend ; and am greatly rejoiced to find your progress in the Roman History already so considerable as to have reached the first Punic War : during the more than twenty years continuance of which, envy was the real cause of so much blood-shed between the two contending cities.

I AM obliged to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS for mentioning the particular men who in the

history of the two hundred preceding years have engaged your chief attention. CORIOLANUS lived about five hundred years before the birth of CHRIST. This great general, at the instigation of DECIUS, then tribune of the people, darkened all the glory of his former life, by joining the Volsci, who were the sworn enemies of his country. The tears and supplications of his wife and mother made him at last repent of the deed : but his repentance cost him his life. His ashes met with uncommon honours in the city : all the Roman matrons put on mourning ; and, on the very spot of ground where he was murdered by the Volsci, a temple was consecrated to his memory. He shewed his policy as a general, when he ravaged the Campania of Rome, in sparing the patrician lands, in order to make the common people suspect their superiors. The Romans swallowed the bait, and did

themselves more harm by their internal discord, than they could ever have suffered from the Volscian army. How long might not the Romans have reaped the benefit of this great man's virtues, if they had been wise enough to stop the mouth of envy in time!

CAMILLUS, conqueror of the Veientes, went into voluntary banishment to avoid the unjust persecution of his enemies; but the distresses of his country moved him to return, and he served the city to a great age.

IN the Claudian family, if I am not mistaken, there were two that bore the name of APPIUS: one of which, refusing to resign his office of Decemvir, was the cause of a revolution: the other, I remember, after he was blind, was, at his request, led into the senate to oppose the motion of an untimely peace with PYRRHUS.

THE

THE consul FABRICIUS, a man of moderate fortune, had virtue enough to refuse the gifts, and despise the threatenings of PYRRHUS, which was indeed no more than his duty; for no reason was ever sufficient to tempt an honest man to betray his country. His whole life was a series of great and fortunate actions; but their lustre is considerably sullied by too great an alloy of pride. Upon the whole, we find, in his character, many virtues worthy our imitation, and some vices to be avoided.

PYRRHUS, the younger, king of Epirus, lived about three hundred years before the birth of our Saviour. He was a bitter enemy to the Romans; but was at last totally overthrown by CURTIUS DENTATUS, and after having escaped many dangers, was killed by a tile, thrown from the top of a house, in the city of Argos. His fate may be a whol-

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some warning to all kings, not to put too much confidence in the smiles of fortune; nor to be so far intoxicated with success as to lose the use of their reason. Though, I confess, he seems in some measure excusable, when we consider how little his enemies seemed inclined to peace. He left posterity several useful maxims in the art of war: among the rest, ‘Never to press your enemy so close as to drive him to despair; but rather open a passage for his retreat.’ His own conduct shews us, that PYRRHUS in his closet, and PYRRHUS in the field, were two very different men.

I HAVE drawn the out-lines of these pictures, lest Your ROYAL HIGHNESS should conclude your last letter to have mentioned five names, that were entirely new to me; but as I am without books, or any other assistance to a worn-out memory, and having

been obliged, in the course of thirty years of business, to think more of things present than times past, I find myself compelled to crave your indulgence, and hope you will not think it too much trouble, with the help of books, and men of learning, to supply what I may omit.

As to the main subject of your letter, I think you quite in the right. Immoderate pride, and ungovernable ambition, are intolerable vices, which grow more abject in proportion as the man they govern rises in the world. In a private man they are rather ridiculous than of any ill consequence, being under the necessary lash of power. The times **YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS** speaks of are past: it is not so common in our days to see men found their ambitious hopes on their own strength. This vice is most dangerous in those who are most powerful. Were it possible to behold,

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behold, at one view, all the kingdoms of the earth, that have, at different times, been laid waste by the ambition of kings, the whole globe would seem a wilderness, and all its waters, streams of blood. No men deserve greater punishment, than those who are capable of sacrificing their country to pride or revenge. How widely different is the conduct of that conscientious man, who, no longer able to serve the public, flies from the reasonable reward of his former labour, and retires from the world. The farther you advance, both in ancient and modern history, the more proofs you will find of human weakness, and human wickedness.

WHAT honest heart can, without indignation, read of bad men accusing others of their own crimes? or with patience see the annals of all kingdoms filled with party broils and persecutions; despicable, yet dangerous,

parasites blackening the characters of good men to weak princes; historians themselves sacrificing truth to their private interest. But to count our father's, or our own vices, would be endless. We should, perhaps, spend our time better, in endeavouring to find out some means to cast the world in a new mould. I believe the best method would be, to pass over the actions of bad men, without giving them much attention; but to dwell with delight on such as deserve to be copied. For instance, when we read of great men, who generously rewarded good services, promoted peace and unanimity, gave no ear to slander, passed no sentence without due examination, who gave an equal and constant protection to virtue, who distinguished every day of their life by some new act of benevolence, who behaved with humanity to all men, whose mildness augmented in proportion as

their power increased, and all such like actions, which, if we have the least sparks of emulation within us, cannot fail to kindle them in our hearts. For example, a CORIOLANUS, who despised all reward but that which virtue brings along with it; all he asked, after having gained a considerable victory, was the freedom of one of his friends, who had fought against him and had been taken prisoner: an AUGUSTUS, who, by lenity and friendly remonstrances, recovered the hearts of his sworn enemies: a TITUS, who accounted every day lost which he had not marked with some good action: a LEWIS the XIth, who, though he died very young, lived long enough to convince the world, that strict honesty is not incompatible with true policy: a LEWIS the XIIth, who, with so much magnanimity, rejected the advice of those who would have persuaded him to seek revenge: a

CHARLES the XIIth, who, during his whole life, midst all his vexations, was never heard to wound the heart of a single subject with a harsh expression.

I AGREE with Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, that the very best services we are able to render our king or country, are no more than our duty, and consequently, that we have no right to insist on the least reward; but, with your leave, I must humbly take the liberty to offer a few thoughts on this subject.

ALL stipends, or salaries, allowed by the government, should be sufficient to support the dignity of the office to which they are annexed; and the very lowest ought, at least, to afford a tolerable maintenance. From an assurance that, in a large kingdom, there will always be a sufficient number of men, whom necessity will oblige to accept a trifle, rather than have nothing, it hath generally been
thought

thought right to proportion a man's revenue to the merit required in the execution of his office ; and by this rule, those of the lowest class are forced to be satisfied with a very small pittance : but there may arise a certain degree of merit, even in the manner of discharging our very simplest duties, which I believe should be rewarded, if a king would encourage his people to exert their faculties for the advancement of his glory, and the well-being of his kingdom.

A MARSHAL of France, hath, if I am right, in time of peace, no more than twelve thousand livres ; but, by the special bounty of the king, marshal SAXE, as a reward of his extraordinary merit, received the annual sum of a hundred thousand dollars. In short, I believe the truth will be, that mere servants are entitled to mere wages ; but men of uncommon merit to extraordinary rewards. Pen-

sions, governments, honorary distinctions, and the like, were never intended for court favorites; but to reward honest men for long and faithful services.

A KING, in governing his people wisely and equitably, does no more than his duty; nevertheless, he would have great reason to be dissatisfied, were the world to refuse him praise, and his people, gratitude; both which are no more than the just reward of his virtues. It would be very hard, and very imprudent, to refuse encouragement to able and laborious men, because they have done no more than their duty. No, I am sure Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will rather act in conformity with that old Chinese law which made it an indispensable duty to reward desert.

I CANNOT conclude without expressing my joy to find you, in so short a time, become so much a man. At Your ROYAL HIGH-

NESS'S

NESS's age one is apt to tire in the course of a long letter, which is commonly finished with more negligence than begun; but, on the contrary, you improve upon the reader as he goes along. Let me shew it to whom I would, I am sure they might conclude it to be wrote by a person already arrived at years of maturity. But what delights me most, is the perfect connection which appears quite thro' the whole letter. If Your ROYAL HIGHNESS goes on in this manner, there will, in a little time, be no difference between the pupil and his preceptors. Such sound thoughts, so well express'd, and so correctly wrote, shall, as they deserve, be carefully preserved, in memory of their young author, whose dear image will be ever fresh in the mind of

Your, &c.

Leckoe, June 23, 1753.

A N S W E R to the preceding
L E T T E R.

I THANK you, my dear TESS, for your agreeable letter, which brought me both pleasure and profit. I am entirely of my TESS's opinion, and think it ill becomes a king to believe false reports, or to be suspicious. Those that think ill of others are not very good men themselves. For instance, CAIN; whose bad conscience made him fear, that other people would do by him, as he had done by his brother.

THE many great examples which you are pleased to speak of, are so many encouragements for me to do like them; and I remember to have read of them in some of the books which the Queen was so good as to give me for a Christmas present. You are quite in

the right in saying that merit ought to be rewarded; for it is no more than just, that those who have deserved reward should enjoy it: beside, we must take pleasure in doing good.

I AM very glad that my dear TESS was pleased with my last letter: as to the dictating part, it was all of it my own; but the writing went so slow, that at last I desired count DUBEN to mark the letters with a lead pencil, and I afterwards wrote them fair over with ink. This is the reason why the latter end was better than the beginning. You may always be assured, my dear TESS, of the constant friendship with which I am,

Your, &c.

GUSTAVE.

LET.

LETTER LVI.

IF I calculate right, this letter must reach
Your ROYAL HIGHNESS the sixth of this
month. Blessed be that day! for it is marked
with the dear name of GUSTAVUS. I well
remember the unspeakable joy that filled the
hearts of all Sweden, when, in the year 1746,
Providence, at length appeased, re-established
our throne. Whilst I am thus musing, me-
thinks I see

The sable night, with sullen mein, retire;
And, o'er yon eastern hill, the chearful morn
Come smiling on. The sun with potent beams
Dispels unwholsome mists, and brings new life
To fields and whistling hind. Such was that
day,

When, after threescore tedious years of hope,

Of

YOUNG PRINCE. 109

Of threescore years in vain, relenting heav'n
At length look'd gracious down, and gave us
thee.

GOD grant that you may prove a real and
a lasting blessing to your country! You have
now your own heart in your hand, and it de-
pends entirely upon yourself to mould it into
what shape you think proper. You have
great reason to thank your Creator for having
made it naturally susceptible of good impres-
sions. Now is the time when they must be
struck. The first, and most important ones
should be, zeal in your religion, firmness in disap-
pointment, and benevolence to all good men.

A noble heart should feel ; at good mens woes
Should melt like wax: but if a daring foe
Insult thy country, let him find it chang'd
To hardest iron. May great GUSTAVUS'
deeds

Direct

110 LETTERS TO A

Direct thy steps : he was in days of peace
A soothing friend, a dreadful foe in war.

A KING ought to have an uncommon share
of humanity in his disposition, because all
courts produce a certain number of invidious
men, who are constantly endeavouring to
build their fortune on the ruin of other people,
and are by no means pleased to see their sove-
reign's bounty extend itself beyond a certain
number of court-favourites. Such men are
professed enemies to virtue, and are sure to per-
secute all her votaries.

Pale Envy banish from thy court ; for he
Who hates desert, himself did never know
To merit love : but deign propitious smile
On virtue, innocence, and make them happy.

Thank God ! I have no reason to fear the
contrary. Your own grateful heart assures me,
you

YOUNG PRINCE. fix

you will never cease to love a people, who, from your cradle, have shewn the tenderest affection for Your ROYAL HIGHNESS; and who, to a man, are ready to spill the last drop of their blood in their king's service..

BUT there is another kind of affection, of which your heart may, perhaps, one day, become but too susceptible. This must be left to the decision of time; for I know no method of guarding against it.

If, in thy riper years, the flame of love,
That spares nor peasant, nor the proudest kings,
Should rage within thee; in the fatal hour
Think on thy fame! nor let thy reason fall
A victim to thy sensibility.

A king's tenderness for his people must never make him forget, that it is no less his duty to be just, than merciful. If he interrupts
the

the course of his own laws, he will infallibly undermine the chief pillar of his throne.

As to true courage, I have no need to be anxious about it; for it is inseparably mingled with your blood.

The martial steel, that yet our native hills
Conceal, shall rise and make thee ample way
To everlasting fame. When, in the cause
Of heav'n, thy arm shall wield the glitt'ring
blade,

Thy country's foe shall tremble, shrink, and
die.

MY dearest PRINCE! let your actions be
such as may afford matter of employment to
all our liberal artists. Be your life spotless,
and your fame will be eternal. Accustom
yourself to converse frequently with your own
heart, and you will become a gracious and
good

YOUNG PRINCE. 113

good king. Let your example and protection
 lift up the head of virtue, and be your power
 a galling yoke on the neck of vice. May
 your favour and confidence be the reward of
 virtue, and you will lay down the burden of
 each day with delight, and safely repose in
 the soft lap of peace. Let heaven bound
 your prospect; and having been, on earth,
 your nation's pride, the world's admiration,
 the terror of your enemies, and the father of
 your people, an eternal crown of glory will
 be your final reward.

I leave thee, PRINCE, within the sacred dome
 Of virtue; there abide. May all the bliss,
 That frail humanity can bear, be thine!
 Bright as thy rising prove thy setting life!
 And when, with human honours satisfy'd,
 Thy disincumber'd soul shall take her flight,
 O may she to her blest original

Ascend!

Ascend! and to thy royal offspring leave

A bright example, and a realm in peace,

I am, &c.

Leckoe, June 30,

1753.

LETTER LVII.

YESTERDAY, being the sixth of this month, we rustic gentry, in shady bowers, and green tents, had the pleasure to drink Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's health in brimming, sparkling, glasses. We did not (as the phrase runs) TAKE THE LIBERTY so to do; but we looked upon it as a privilege we had a right to claim in consequence of our attachment to your person. We were not extravagantly merry, because we have been used to regard every day, since your birth, as a day of joy; and partly, on account of our years, which have

have quenched some of the wild fire of youth, and given us a chearful uniformity of temper in its room. We were, however, all as gay as men of our age ought to be. We sat in the midst of our friends and domestics: the first we entertained as well as we could, and endeavoured to encourage the latter by our uncommon affability; but, after all, we had little reason to assume to ourselves the merit of their joy: the day was alone sufficient. Those who enjoy the natural heat of the sun, have no need of artificial fire.

IN France, I have heard it observed, that there is no time more agreeable than that which a man spends in the midst of his family, '*dans le sein de sa famille.*' I am quite of the same opinion; but I would not be understood, in the word FAMILY, to include every selfish relation, who may expect my death with impatience, or trouble me once or
twice

twice a year with a ceremonious visit. No, my sincerest friends are my nearest relations: but when, in the number, I have the pleasure to count any of those whose blood flowed from the same fountain with my own, they have undoubtedly a right to claim a just and natural preference. ~ Among such companions, I can live without danger, unsuspicious, and unsuspected. If I happen to say a few words that are not quite foolish, they are immediately exalted to the clouds, like the shining bubbles blown up into the air by children; and when I chance to speak peevishly, or without thought, my words are no sooner uttered than forgotten. No day of pleasure is ever succeeded by a day of repentance. Every hour brings us equal serenity and peace. Not a butterfly passes that does not raise in us a grateful admiration of our Creator; but the disaster must be very extraordinary that is

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capable of disturbing our peace, or provokes our patience. We consider ourselves as creatures sent into the world for the consolation and support of each other. In case of bad news, there is not a man amongst us that would not gladly sacrifice his own quiet to be excused the pain of communicating it to the rest; but when we are agreeably surpris'd with the contrary, each strives to be the first joyful messenger to the community. We know no clouds but those which promote or threaten our harvest. We sleep away the darkness of the night, and heighten the pleasures of the day by rational contemplation and acts of christian charity, endeavouring to ease our neighbours of their heavy burthen; that we, when tired, may lay down our own with joy, and finish our journey thro' this life in expectation of a better.

WHAT

WHAT is Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's opinion of this picture? Is it possible to imagine any thing more agreeable? What, then, must be your happiness, who live in the midst of a whole nation of sincere friends! With how much pains and hazard are not we obliged to seek friendship and alliance, whilst yours are attached to your very cradle. Your dear name was wrote in all our hearts from the moment of your birth. You live in the bosom of ten thousand friends and relations. Your best inheritance is the name of FATHER OF YOUR COUNTRY, and your paternal duties are those which you will fulfil with the most pleasure. If, in your high sphere, you act in obedience to the will of him who fixed you there, you will enjoy all the satisfaction of a private life, even in the midst of business: your days will be one continued scene of bliss, and your
grave

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grave be dewed with the filial tears of your people.

But Your ROYAL HIGHNESS must by no means imagine that your birth gives you an indubitable right to the love of the nation: it must be acquired. Indeed the acquisition will not cost you much pains. Your royal blood, our duty, our natural swedish loyalty, ground the edifice; and your piety, your justice, your affability will complete the pile.

Let me persuade Your ROYAL HIGHNESS to place all your security in your peoples affection; you may then brave the most destructive efforts of time: you will live secure of your subjects confidence, and your name will never die. I say confidence; for unfortunate is the prince who appears to his people, only in an awful light,

For

FOR my part, I am so well assured of your noble intentions, that I may say with OVID,

Dî tibi dent annos ! a te nam cætera fumes.

I am, &c.

Leckoe, July. 7,

1753.

LETTER LVIII.

I HAVE been frequently afraid that these moral epistles of mine might seem a little too serious for Your ROYAL HIGHNESS ; but having lately received the copies of some few letters, wrote by Mons. FONTENAIſ to his pupil the duke of CHARTRES, afterwards duke of ORLEANS and regent of France, during the minority of the present king ; and having read these letters, I am fully convinced, that morality is the most proper, and most

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most important subject of those to a young prince.

I KNOW very well that Your ROYAL HIGHNESS understands French; but I have a great esteem for our mother-tongue, and have a mind to try if it is not possible for us to translate from a language that hath been so carefully polished, without losing aught of the original emphasis. If you should be desirous to compare the translation with the French, I will send the latter as soon as commanded, which I have now omitted for fear of troubling you with too large a packet.

How small a value I set on my own letters, appears in my adding this of FONTENAISS, which is so much superior to any of mine. How far the the duke of OLEANS followed the wholesome advice it contains, I leave to history. He was indeed a great man; but not without his faults. This proves to us,

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that

that the best advice will sometimes fall fruitless to the ground.

WE governors were no more intended to reap the fruit of our labour, than the most diligent peasant to be constantly blest with a profitable harvest; for Providence does not always think fit to second our endeavours. We are but too often mortified with seeing our youth turn out very indifferently, in manhood, from what we had reason to expect; but we ought to be tolerably satisfied, if we meet with no ingratitude, and have nothing to fear from our own consciences.

I DAILY thank God that I have the happiness to see Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's improvement keep pace with my wishes; and that your Royal Father is graciously pleased to honour us with his approbation. I, a man just sinking into the grave, can safely ask heaven to witness the purity and truth of my zeal

for your honour, and present and future felicity.

TRANSLATION of a LETTER from Mons.
FONTENAI to the duke of CHARTRES.

THE campaign is now almost at an end, and I shall soon have the pleasure to see Your HIGHNESS return, attended by a kind of fame, which must, of course, be very agreeable to you. Letters from the army inform me, that your behaviour is obliging without affectation, and affable without too much familiarity; that, in councils of war, you have spoken sensibly and with resolution, yet not without submitting your opinion to men of more experience; that you have saved the life of a poor creature, not quite unworthy of compassion, who had fled his colours, from a weakness in nature, or for want of

being previously instructed in the heinousness of his crime.

I DARE venture to prophesy, that you will be no less the darling of the court than of the army; for I have observed, that every one here is already devoted to your service. Nevertheless, I must advise you not to put too much confidence in this kind of devotion. The court is a scene of change, where the favorites of to-day are the objects of to-morrow's contempt. Hitherto, your birth, your innocence, your affability, have been sufficient to gain you the love of mankind; but now that we may justly expect to see your virtues break forth into action, you must be prepared to pass a more severe examination. Men of uncommon penetration, who are but little inclined to palliate, have now fixed their keen eyes upon your conduct. They not only expect to see you above the common vices of a court, but
that

that you will contribute, as much as you can, to stop their progress in other men; that calumny will find in you a very powerful enemy; that you will shew the world, by your own example, that the only way to set the most malicious tongues at defiance, is to be, in every respect, an honest man. From the very earliest times, we find that all wise men have agreed in thinking nothing more honourable than true honesty. He that would become fundamentally honest, must begin by dealing honestly with himself, by an impartial examination of his own heart, and a sincere desire to grow virtuous. Let him then seek the acquaintance of men known for their integrity, endeavour to pry into their hearts, and resolve to follow their examples; by this means, he will gradually imbibe their principles, and adopt their manners. But there is one caution necessary in the choice of our ac-

quaintance: they should not only be men of sound morals, but of sound understanding; for without this, they may easily give virtue itself a false bias, and lead us into error without design.

LET me advise Your HIGHNESS, by no means to forsake your books: they will always be your most rational amusement, and prove the best means of adorning your natural good sense. You will do well to read such authors as teach you the knowledge of mankind, and of yourself. The chief study of a prince should be human nature, the art of gaining mens hearts, and of judging properly in what manner the peculiar talents of every individual may be employed to most advantage: but let him carefully avoid the unpardonable error of confounding worthy men with those of an opposite character, by behaving to both in the same manner. I am sorry to say, that
this

this is a fault with which most princes are but too justly charged, who in giving their confidence or familiarity without choice, do themselves more harm than they can possibly be aware of. Their favour loses all its value in the eyes of honest men, as soon as it is bestowed on a set of creatures who deserve nothing but contempt.

A KING, who hath not applied himself assiduously to the study of men, will never acquire the fame of a wise sovereign. He will betray his ignorance in placing his servants improperly; that which was due to one, he will give to another, and will punish or reward without choice or reason. Those who are engaged in the service of such a master, may be said to risque their fortunes in the wheel of a lottery; a prudent man will not play so hazardous a game; his time, the fruit of his labour, and life itself, are of too much value to

be ventured on so precarious a bottom. Such a prince would have made but a poor figure even in private life: from his want of discernment, he would have been insensible to merit, and would often have exposed himself in being delighted with dulness and buffoonery. I have seen great men strangely embarrassed, when they happened to be present where some work of genius was read to the company. They were obliged to take their cue from the eyes of other people, before they dared to give their opinion. Such a dubious, unfinished, understanding, is not to be pardoned even in a private gentleman, but much less in those who have had the advantage of a superior education.

As a member of society, you should be honest, benevolent, and polite; but I have already told you, and cannot tell you too often, that these are not to be acquired without a nice attention

tention, the study of good authors, and frequent conversation with wise men. If you should think proper to despise this advice, I cannot help assuring you, that you will live to find your high birth a very poor distinction; that you will never be able to see things in a true light, to separate and compare your ideas, or to foresee what may prove advantageous or detrimental to you.

IF the true principles of honesty or honour (they are the same thing) be not ingrafted in your heart, you will often want resolution to obey the dictates of reason, and will consequently act irrationally, or, in another word, foolishly. Without a right idea of true politeness, you will frequently appear rude when you intend to be most obliging, and will never attain that agreeable manner of conversing with mankind, so necessary in a man of quality, and which is far from being

incompatible with the character of an honest man. A wise prince will think the petulance of wit below him. If he be blessed with a superiority of genius, he will carefully submit it to the government of reason, and will rather chuse to win the hearts, than raise the mirth, of his company. We stand but a small chance to succeed in our attempts to please, if we do not conform ourselves to the characters and circumstances of those with whom we converse. When we are obliged to associate with ignorance, we must forget our learning; and our joy, when in the house of mourning. These are rules from which even kings themselves are not exempt, if they wish for the love and esteem of mankind; but our complaisance will lose all its merit, if it be not so judiciously managed as to seem rather the effect of nature than of art or affectation.

I HAVE

YOUNG PRINCE. 131

I HAVE seen many people, that were really unpolished, who, because they had pick'd up a few sugar'd phrases, which custom hath introduced into modern conversation, believed themselves arrived at the highest pitch of politeness. But these men do not consider, that genuine politeness consists in consulting the ease and satisfaction of our company, in suiting our discourse to their ideas, and in leaving them satisfied with themselves. This requires penetration, and a knowledge of the world.

YOU, my dear SIR, are fully persuaded that all virtues, without distinction, are necessary; and that their combination in the same person, constitutes the character of a truly great man. To display each virtue separately, were endless: beside, I think you will find the most brilliant ones mentioned in my former letters. But there yet remain several,

veral, which I have scarce named, that are no less essential than those with which you are already acquainted.

WHAT would Your HIGHNESS think of the character of a man, howsoever admirable in other respects, in whom truth, fidelity, secrecy, friendship, or gratitude were wanting? What credit can we give to the tongue that hath once told us a lie? What alliance can we make with one whom we know to be capable of breaking promises, and divulging secrets; whose falshood, or volatility, is sure to abuse our confidence, and expose our credulity to the eyes of prudence? Or what esteem can we have for the prince on whose heart our best services, and most submissive affection, make no impression; who can forget the most faithful of his servants the moment he hath left his presence? a kind of ingratitude which proceeds either from a frivolous
dis-

disposition, an obdurate heart, or from a proud notion that other men were created for his service, and that the privileges he enjoys, above the rest of his countrymen, are no more than his birth-right, and the reward of his merit. A prince, with such sentiments, becomes an easy prey to Adulation, who artfully turns them to her own advantage; and when she hath once gained a full ascendent over him, he is generally lost beyond recovery: sincere and honest men reach out their hands in vain; he rejects their assistance, and will listen to none but those that deceive him, who conceal his vices, and adorn him with imaginary virtues.

You, my dear SIR, will soon stand exposed to a tribe of men, who, under the mask of fidelity, will be your most dangerous enemies; who will endeavour to please and not to serve you. The subjects of their conversation
will

will be amusements and pleasures, which, of howsoever shameful a nature, you will soon be made to partake. Thus they will insinuate themselves by degrees, till, by the aid of your passions, they gain an absolute power over your reason, and will then use your bounty to increase their own interest, and indulge their pride. You cannot, therefore, be too firmly on your guard. Put these men to the proof; discover the latent turpitude of their hearts, and spurn them from you. Such treacherous, abject souls, must be treated with contempt; for if once they command your ear, they will convey a poison to your heart, that will soon efface the image of all good men, by throwing a ludicrous light upon their virtues; for the constant fear of being discovered, makes them natural and inveterate enemies to men whose characters are opposite to their own.

WITH

YOUNG PRINCE. 135

WITH what caution ought persons of your rank to guard against false impressions, by which you may so easily be led to injustice and tyranny! But if ever it should be your ill-fortune to have sentenced a fellow-creature, without sufficient previous examination, or mature reflection, doubt not a moment, but repeal your sentence. In this case, your steadfastness would be a vice, and your mutability becomes a virtue.

How necessary so ever wealth may be to a good prince in the execution of his generous designs, I shall not say a word to encourage you in the pursuit of it. Nature and fortune have dealt so liberally by you, that if you but continue in the road to those honours which are built on merit, and which alone deserve your attention, the rest will infallibly follow. The highest honour that Your HIGHNESS can possibly aspire after, is the affection

affection of your sovereign, who neither loves nor praises that which is not amiable and praise-worthy. It is a singular happiness, that in obeying your God you will obey your king. You have reason to thank heaven for having made you a spectator of his virtues. To this example, I may add that of your parents. I myself was in the army when the duke your father made his first campaign. Never did the heroic virtues of any man break forth with more rapidity and more lustre; but it was no wonder; for they were a part of his inheritance. His unshaken courage had so strong an influence on the troops which he commanded, that they appeared to be invincible; at the same time that his mildness and affability captivated the hearts of all that approached him. Those who have the honour to attend him to St. Cloud are daily witnesses of his constancy of mind and serenity of temper,

per, which nothing in the world can shake or discompose. Those who have the happiness to wait upon the Duchess, are in raptures when they speak of her uncommon sense, resolution, openness of behaviour, compassion, and liberality.

WHAT excellent guides, and glorious examples, are these! The path before you is so plain, that it is impossible you can miss your way.

THE most sublime of all subjects remains yet unmentioned; but I dare not boast of abilities sufficient to support me through so important an article: it were, otherwise, my duty to give you an adequate idea of religion in general, and to shew the indispensable necessity of all our christian duties. I hope you will think differently from those courtiers who expose their folly, in avoiding the conversation of pious men. I am sure, in general, you will

will find no company more chearfully instructive than that of a good Christian.

You may, if you think proper, even at court, find those who are able to convince you of the vanity of all sublunary things; that there is none perfectly great, except God; that a king without religion is a despicable mortal; that virtue, guided only by reason, must be lost in uncertainty; that we have no unerring compass, but revelation, and the example of good men.

I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER LIX.

I HAVE often thought, that one of the most useful books, for a great man, would be, a collection of all the praise that panegyrists, poets, historians, &c. have bestowed on undeserving princes. This would shew him the deceitfulness of flattery, its inefficacy on the judgment of posterity, and its invariable selfishness in all ages. We read of no tyrant, how great a disgrace forever to human nature and the Roman name, whose coin did not bear the golden words *PATER PATRIÆ*, or who did not receive some equivalent honour. But impartial history hath long since torn off the mask, unveiled their actions, and assigned them their proper place in the class of tyrants; whilst their medals, in our cabinets, remain an eternal satire on their names, and a reproach to the vile adulation of their times.

THE

THE constant abuse of praise hath greatly sunk its value. A miser may be extolled for his generosity at the expence of a single penny. A poet will sell you praise for less than a crown a sheet. No wonder, therefore, that those who have much gold, and many favours, to lay out in the purchase of this commodity, are honoured with a plentiful share of it. But too large a portion, like too copious a dose of opium, will, if it has no worse effect, lull us into a dangerous state of insensibility. Nevertheless, such is man's innate thirst after fame, that all we can possibly urge in contempt of ill-timed praise and abject flattery, generally vanishes into air like a bubble. Yet, this poison, dangerous as it is, may, by a skilful hand, be so prepared as to become a wholesome medicine.

KINGS and princes are born to hear themselves praised on every occasion: but those

de-

YOUNG PRINCE. 141

deserve it most who regard it as a mode, or as a tribute due to their robes, which would equally have been paid to every other man in their place. No prince was ever entirely destitute of good qualities. Even the greatest tyrants have, now and then, a serene moment which produces some good. I would, therefore, by no means, discourage praise where it is due; but I would have all flattery considered as spoken in derision, and received as an affront, by those to whom it is addressed.

OUR ERICH the XIV, deserved the name of a learned prince; but he that would add wisdom to his character, must, himself, be little better than a fool.

JOHN the III^d deserves to be gratefully remembered for his mild government, and affection for the liberal arts; but those who have any regard for his name, do well in passing over in silence the article of his religion.

CHARLES

CHARLES the IXth was a very brave prince; but if, during his reign, I had been asked my opinion of his temper, I should have endeavoured to start another subject.

OUR queen CHRISTINA may be justly praised for her sense; but he that would write her panegyric, must touch upon her conduct with a very gentle hand.

CHARLES the XIth was, in many respects, a great king; but if his contemporary writers had extolled him for being a generous protector of our liberty and private fortunes, their works would have been so many ironical libels against the crown.

NOBODY will refuse to allow CHARLES the XIIth the name of a brave general; but he who had dared to flatter him for his extraordinary circumspection, would by no means have insinuated himself into the favour of a prince of his penetration and sincerity.

I

YOUNG PRINCE. 143

I WOULD advise all those who are desirous of erecting elegant and lasting monuments to the memory of great men, not to suffer flattery to have any hand in the work ; for flattery, on such occasions, is a very bungling architect. BOILEAU is quite in the right, when he says,

Un flatteur délicat n'ébranle point les sens ;
Mais un auteur, novice à rependre l'encens,
Souvent à son heros, dans un bizarre ouvrage,
Donne de l'encensoir au travers du visage.

Flatt'ry, with skill apply'd, will ne'er offend ;
But when a bungling priest will needs pretend
To offer incense (which is oft the case)
He throws the censer in his heroe's face.]

THE same author, writing in praise of a king who well deserved it, to avoid the appearance of flattery, begins thus,

Grand

Grand Roi, c'est mon défaut, je ne saurois
flatter :

Je ne fai point au ciel placer un ridicule,
D'un nain faire un Atlas, ou d'un lache un
Hercule ;

Et sans cesse en esclave à la suite des grands,
A des dieux sans vertu prodiguer mon encens.

Great king, in flatt'ry I am quite unskill'd.
I ne'er could place an ape amid the skies,
Stretch a mere pigmy to a giant's size ;
Or, to the great a slave condemn'd to please,
In a soft coward sing an Hercules.
If 'tis a fault, that fault be ever mine !
I'll burn no incense at a worthless shrine.

If princes must needs listen to the voice of
praise, its properest object, in my opinion,
would be their social virtues, such as are an
ornament to mankind in general ; I mean
friendship,

friendship, compassion, affability: which, as they speak a kind of condescension in a prince, add greatly to his honour. The younger PLINY, if I err not, in speaking to the senate of the emperor TRAJAN, says, ‘Unum ille
 ‘se ex nobis, et hoc magis excellit atque emi-
 ‘net, quod unum ex nobis putat; nec minus
 ‘hominem se, quam hominibus præesse, me-
 ‘minit.’ It may happen, at one time or other, that this letter may fall into the hands of people unacquainted with the Latin language; I will, therefore, translate the words.
 ‘He is the more exalted above us, because he
 ‘accounts himself our equal; and whilst he
 ‘remembers that he rules mankind, forgets
 ‘not that he himself is but a man.’

PLINY was much in the right. The great art of a king should be, to veil his own lustre in such a manner as not to eclipse those that approach him. The most glorious of all

praise is that which is spoken by our own deeds ; and those monuments are most durable, which virtue and science erect out of gratitude for their protection. This reminds me of Madam le CAMUS' epitaph on the Duke of ST. AIGNAN.

Saint AIGNAN finit une vie,
Qui fut toujours d'honneurs, et de plaisirs, suivie ;
Mais laissons son éloge ; il n'en a pas besoin.

Les filles de Mémoire
Prendront, pour lui, le même soin
Qu'il prit, autre fois, pour leur gloire.

Alas ! ST. AIGNAN ends his days
Of honour, pleasure ; but what need of praise ?
ST. AIGNAN ne'er will want his share.
He loved the Muses, made their fame his care,
The Muses, when these lines, thro' time, are dim,
In gratitude, will do as much for him.

Be

YOUNG PRINCE. 147

BE not offended, my dear SIR, that I still continue to fight with so much zeal against flattery. She is a bold and dangerous enemy, whose artful attacks require strong intrenchments. I have spoken so much against common praise, because I should be glad to see Your ROYAL HIGHNESS possessed of that solid fame which is the result of great actions, and which I hope will not only be imprinted on perishable paper, but engraven on the marble monuments of your peoples felicity.

I REMEMBER, with pleasure, that, when you was but three years old, I heard you give this answer to a certain general, who was never known to be lavish of his praises, ‘ Sir, ‘ you are pleased to flatter me.’ You well deserved the compliment he made you; but to praise a man to his face will always have the

appearance of flattery ; without the least tincture of which

I am, &c.

Leckoe, July 21, 1753.

L E T T E R L X .

IN reading history, I have often wondered, why we do not find all kings to have been the greatest, most virtuous and most learned men of their times. In their infancy, they are carefully guarded against every object that might tarnish their minds with the least vicious idea. As soon as they begin to reflect, they are committed to the care of those whose good characters are universally established. Learned and skilful men instruct them in arts and sciences. They pass their leisure hours with sensible and polite persons. Yet notwithstanding all these advantages, disappointment

ment

ment is often the only fruit of so many peoples zeal and labour.

How different from this is the fate of other children? Who, before they can hope to rise to distinction, like the heroe of a fairy-tale, have many craggy mountains to climb, many an intricate maze to traverse, many an hideous monster to encounter. It were a subject not unworthy Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, to enquire into the cause why it so frequently happens, that a tree so carefully nourished should disappoint our hopes, whilst another stem, without assistance, should prove so abundantly fruitful. The following observations may perhaps be of some assistance to you in the solution.

A COURT, as it consists of a numerous assembly of people, though collected with ever so much circumspection, will always produce some vicious characters. Now no eyes are

more acute, no minds more susceptible of impressions, than those of children. They are always upon the watch, and immediately seize the least indecent word or gesture. That which their governors have, with so much care, endeavoured to conceal, naturally strikes their imagination, and raises their curiosity. Royal children, who are blest with a constant free admission to all that is great and excellent, are often prompted by a dangerous curiosity to pry into the secrets of low life; whilst those of an inferior birth are, on the contrary, moved by the same principle to aspire. I am firmly of opinion that if the whole court were immoral and dissolute, except one or two grave and virtuous men, the young prince would soon grow serious and good, merely from a natural tendency in youth to that which is singular.

YOUNG PRINCE. 151

ALL children, in whatsoever rank they are born, bear a strong resemblance to each other in their dispositions and manners. Boys, of all nations, ride upon sticks, plash in the water, toss their balls, and play unlucky pranks; whilst girls, as it were by instinct, dress victuals, wash linen, make visits, drink tea, adorn their babies, adjust their toilets, and many other things of the like nature, which I have known cleave to some of the fair to a pretty advanced age. If, therefore, all children be born with the same passions, an equal care is certainly required in their education.

YOUNG princes, when they do amiss, are punished with kind admonitions; but kind words are weak arguments to young people. The punishments of other children are severe reprimands, threatnings, and, sometimes, blows: these make a deeper impression, and are much longer remembered. Private peo-

ple have seldom much time to spend in ceremony with their children.

THAT part of mankind which is born to obey, have but two ways to rise in the world. They must of necessity endeavour to become either useful or agreeable. The latter costs the least pains, and requires the least art. In the education of a prince, a few moments of court-flattery is sufficient to destroy the labour of many days: but who will give themselves the trouble to say fine things to the son of a peasant? For where would be their interest? If the poor boy has, by chance, a mind to shew his manners, he is sure to be laugh'd at for his awkwardness; and that derision is sometimes a means of quickening a latent seed of ambition which afterwards pushes its way to honour.

THERE is a great difference between being born at a goal, and having our race to run.

Young

YOUNG PRINCE. 153

Young princes are but too apt to say to themselves, ‘ Why should I give myself any trouble? ‘ who can rob me of my birth-right?’ They forget that true merit in a private man, is more honorable than the title of prince unworthily given. Those that are born to small fortunes, no prerogatives, and are mere adventurers in the world, must, of necessity, have recourse to their own abilities.

WE have commonly least inclination for things most in our power. How many people are there in Paris who have never seen the hospital for invalides? which is so fine a building, and so admirably well regulated. A young prince, who hath so many and frequent opportunities of improvement, may sometimes be so weak as to reason in this manner: ‘ I have time enough. I have no inclination to-day. I’ll do something else. I can learn whenever I will.’ But this procrastination

is a dangerous thing. Time moves forward, and the best genius will rust if it be not used: besides, the trouble or difficulty we dreaded, which, at first might have been overcome with ease, continues increasing upon our hands, till, at length, it becomes insurmountable. I speak by experience; for when I happen to have long neglected answering a letter, putting it off from one post to another, from a belief that one week more or less can make no great difference; I at last grow quite ashamed of my idleness, and rather sit down with reproach than attempt what appears impossible.

THOSE that are born to less eminence, enjoy the great advantage of travelling; by which means they become acquainted with the manners of various nations, increase their knowledge and improve their understanding. For these reasons it frequently happens that private gentlemen attract the esteem and admiration of
all.

YOUNG PRINCE. 155

all the world, whilst some princes are honoured with nothing more than a shew of respect.

THESE characteristics are, by no means, indirectly aimed at Your ROYAL HIGHNESS. I should not deserve the high trust with which I am honoured, were I capable of flattery; but I should oppose my own conscience, if I did not rejoice the whole kingdom with this true testimony, That your zealous application to learning is full as great as it could possibly be, if you had been born to struggle with a thousand difficulties: and as I am convinced it will only be a means to animate you, I may safely add, that you have made a much greater progress than could be expected from your years; also, that you have fully conceived how seldom it will be necessary to remember you are a prince, but how often you will have occasion to recollect that you are a man.

I CHOSE the subject of this letter, to shew Your ROYAL HIGHNESS the great importance of education, that when the time shall come, you may think it worth your while to have an eye to that of your subjects; for without your care many a fine genius will be intirely lost, and the most brilliant, with more assistance, would have become a still brighter and a better man.

OUR journey from the cradle to the grave is divided into four different stages. The pleasing characteristics of childhood are innocence, and chearfulness; those of youth, modesty, and a thirst after knowledge; of manhood, sedateness, and resolution; and of age, wisdom, and a longing after futurity. Thus, to those that have had a rational education, every part of life hath its peculiar employment and utility.

YOUNG PRINCE. 157

I CANNOT take my leave of Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, without desiring you not to stand still in any part of your course. The reason why so many princes have, in the sequel, disappointed the hopes they raised at their first setting out, is because they tired on their journey. The traveller who reposes too long, grows stiff, and is unable to proceed. Our pilgrimage through virtue and learning, is not finished till we reach the grave; and the only way to arrive in safety, is neither to push too rapidly forward, nor loiter too long upon the road.

I am, &c.

Leckoe, July 28,

1753.

My

My dear TESS,

YOU have been so good as to write several letters to me. I thank you sincerely for them, and beg you will not take it amiss that I have not answered them, because I have been hindered by the name-days of the king and queen, which we have celebrated. So long as I have not the pleasure to see my TESS, I shall always be glad to receive his letters; and I pray you, my dear TESS, to be assured of my constant friendship.

I am your, &c.

GUSTAVE.

LET-

LETTER LXI.

I HAVE observed that our young Swedes, at their return from travelling, generally deride and contemn the manners of their native country, as if they had never been in the least acquainted with them; when at the same time, if we come to close examination, they appear to have travelled to no other purpose but to have their hair frized, and their bodies dressed for a pattern of the mode. Our walk, our bows, our way of speaking, our taste, our buildings, our equipages, our dress, our diversions, in short, every thing appears ridiculous and strange: and I can without difficulty believe them sincere. Before they go abroad, they use the things of this world, as we are commanded to do: namely, as tho' they used them not at all. They receive their first impressions in foreign countries,

having

having neither observed, nor even seen, any thing in their own.

THOSE who have travelled into France, behave as if they had been entirely educated there; and are quite full of that prejudice, in favour of french customs, with which most men judge of those to which they were born. If, on the contrary, they return from England, they have not only all the manners of a Briton, but are become as inveterate enemies to France, as if they had been born in the center of London. In a word, one hates all that is french, another can bear nothing that is english, a third despises every thing that comes from Germany; but they all agree in falling out with the manners of their native Sweden.

IN thus finding fault with my countrymen, I am not more severe upon any one, than on myself. When I first returned from France,

I

YOUNG PRINCE. 161

I was in every respect a Petit-maitre, or french fop.

It would be acting very unadvisedly, if, whilst I endeavour to expose the folly of particular men, I should give Your ROYAL HIGHNESS an unfavourable idea of all those that have travelled. This were quite opposite to my design. I should think myself undeserving the name of a Swede, if I did not distinguish, and set a true value on, the merit of such of my countrymen, whose travels have been an honour to themselves, and an advantage to their country. I could, without difficulty, count a great number of these; and truth obliges me to confess, that such men are more especially useful, nay, even indispensable, to this distant nation, as we are under the necessity of fetching that which no body will bring.

Me

My endeavour hath always been, to awake in you an universal attention; to shew you the need of a father's care and inspection, with regard to the order and happiness of his family; to caution you against believing that there is any thing on earth so perfect as not to admit of improvement, and to point out to you the various roads that lead thither; which, though they prove not infallible, may, at least, serve to conduct men of more abilities into the right way. But to return to our subject.

It might not perhaps be much amiss, to oblige all those who have a mind to travel, first to visit every province of this kingdom, to make themselves well acquainted with our own nature, customs, wants and advantages; to examine them previously, and not to consent to their departure till they had given proof of their being properly qualified to travel.

THUS

Thus they would be able to distinguish those things which are good in their own country, from those that want improvement. They would then see, whether it were advisable in those cold climes, to adopt the modes of southern nations. They would learn to know the value of money, the need of œconomy in travelling, and would at least buy their experience of their fellow-subjects. It would enable them to judge whether the magnificence of more wealthy nations be suitable to our revenues; whether foreign œconomy would thrive in this frozen soil; and whether modern compliments are consistent with our old swedish honesty. They would be qualified, instead of weighing all things in a french, english, or swedish balance, to judge impartially of each nation. A swedish officer, who would engage himself in foreign service, should first be well acquainted with the state
of

of our own army; he will, otherwise, not distinguish what he has to learn abroad, from that which is already known at home. Before we enquire into other religions, we should be well instructed in our own. A prudent merchant will not fail to be informed, what commodities are most wanted; of the relative goodness and prices of foreign and home productions: and according to such necessary intelligence, he directs his voyages or correspondence. A peasant, who goes to market with intent to buy-in provision for his family, must unavoidably have known his wants before he came from home.

THESE precautions in a traveller, would often save him the trouble of making needless enquiries into things which he might have seen in greater perfection in his own country. It might also not be improper to make the intended traveller explain himself with regard

to

YOUNG PRINCE. 165

to the particular science which he means to pursue. This would enable us, at his return to judge how far he had improved his capacity to serve his country: for we must not only become fine gentlemen, but useful members of society.

IN consideration of the vast sums that are carried out of this kingdom by travellers, we ought, at least, to do all in our power to render the golden stream fruitful. When your riper age shall allow Your ROYAL HIGHNESS more leisure, you may perhaps find this irregular letter to be no improper object of further reflection.

I am, &c.

Leckoe, Aug. 1,

1753.

LET-

LETTER LXII.

IN conversing with the farmers of the neighbourhood, I sometimes take the liberty to object to their method of cultivation, but am generally mortified with this answer, ‘Why truly, Sir, our fathers did so before us.’ This argument hath long appeared, to me, the chief obstacle in the progress of improvement: but I have at last conceived the excellence of that rule which requires our own innocence before we find our neighbour guilty: and have been thence led to examine whether, whilst I am accusing my dependents, I myself am entirely free from prejudice in favour of those customs which I have inherited. To my own confusion, I am forced to confess, that this impression is universal; that mankind, in general, look upon that as perfectly good which, for many generations, hath been

been handed down from father to son; that there are many things which we honour with almost a religious veneration, for no other reason than because they were in esteem among the ancients. I am, in this respect, no less an enthusiast than other men: but, when I come to enquire into the cause of my admiration, I find that I have blindly obeyed the laws which my father received from his father and my grandfather from his ancestors.

How many old * poets do we not read with a kind of reverence, whose verses, if they were the produce of our own times, would, rather than delight the learned, be employed to twist the locks of the illiterate? A MAROT, a RONSARD, and several others, sometimes unintelligible, frequently low, and generally negligent,

* It appears by what follows, that the author is not speaking of the greek or latin poets.

gligent, are universally read and esteemed, tho' they are much inferior to later writers.

IN compliance with the sentiments of those under whom I was educated, I believed, till I was considerably advanced in life, that a certain very indifferent painter, who had made a great figure in his own time, was the most sublime artist that ever lived. I could mention an infinite number of the like examples in all arts and sciences; but as my design is to censure my own prejudice, and not the abilities of those honest men whose works were equal to the light and instruction they had received, I shall content myself with saying, that, to be a competent judge of excellence, a man must be fully possessed of what is called a true taste. But YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS will naturally ask, how this TASTE is to be acquired?

I BELIEVE the most effectual method will be, to read attentively, in the presence of judicious

dicious men, such * modern books as are excellent in their kind; endeavouring to discover the grounds of those perfections that have gain'd the author his reputation. After this, it may not be improper to take a survey of the † ancients, and see how far they have observed the rules which we have discovered in the best modern writers. It will then be necessary to make acquaintance with men who know the world: from these we must learn to read mankind. He that confines his study merely to books, may become a scholar, but he will remain a pedant. There is undoubtedly great merit in penetrating into the inmost recesses of literature; yet, were I to chuse either

* We are not, throughout the whole letter, to confine the word MODERN merely to the present age.

† THE reader will please to remember that our author is speaking of french writers.

ther profound learning, or true taste, I would without hesitation reject the first.

IF taste be so desirable a thing to a private man, how indispensibly necessary is it not to kings and princes, whose approbation or dislike is frequently followed by a whole nation? In a country, whose sovereign has no taste, or, which is worse, a false one, every flower of learning must wither, arts slumber, and science die.

UPON the whole, I believe it impossible to prescribe positive rules for taste. It may in general be said to consist in a sound and rational judgment; though it will be frequently found to depend upon opinion. I have known two sensible men think very differently of the same thing: yet the sentiments of both were founded upon strong arguments.

THOSE who are ignorant of certain axioms which have been long received as the basis of

arts

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arts and sciences, must inevitably sin against taste. A man who has more pleasure in reading CLELIE than DON QUIXOTE, or prefers PARDON's theatrical works to those of CORNEILLE, may, without ceremony, be condemned for having no taste at all. He who judges of paintings by the height or brightness of the colouring, hath certainly a bad taste. It is for want of taste that, in the furniture of some houses, we are shocked with a mixture of colours that disagree in nature. I should have a false taste were I to place a Colossus on a small pedestal: but to give you all the instances of this kind would require a volume.

SINCE the times are happily become more enlightened, and the invention of printing hath converted learning into a merchandise, the opportunities of forming a true taste are greatly increased. The * Greeks and Romans had

* I suppose this is to be understood of the poorer sort.

no helps but their memory, and now and then a dear-bought manuscript. We are much happier in this respect. Every branch of learning may be purchased at a reasonable price : if we make a bad choice, it is our own fault.

NOTWITHSTANDING what I have said in favour of the moderns, if we yet labour under the same difficulties with the ancients, I am afraid the present age would have little cause to boast of its superiority. How many are there amongst us who pass for men of bright parts, and great understanding, whose own brain never gave birth to a single idea ; whose thoughts are all children of adoption ; whose only talent is a strong memory ?

It is also a matter of great doubt whether that which, in this age, we call TRUE TASTE, will be deemed such in the next : it is, however, sufficient to be possessed of the best taste of one's own times. Our successors will have
the

the same privilege, which we have enjoyed, to adopt, or reject, the opinions of their forefathers. We have, indeed, great reason to rejoice that the taste of former ages hath not been absolutely intailed upon us. The Greeks thought that a man not skilled in music was unqualified to teach any other thing. If this opinion had made its way down to us, I should never have been honoured with the place of governor to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS.

IN Sybaris, an ancient city of Calabria, it was the custom to invite to their entertainments a long time beforehand, and if any of the guests, in the mean while, happened to invent a new and elegant dish, he immediately obtained a *privilegium exclusivum*. I, who could hardly make an hasty-pudding, should have made a bad figure in a city where the seat of merit lay in the belly.

IN Rome it was the fashion for every man of the least distinction to have a person in his service called a Nomenclator, whose business it was to follow his master in the streets, and tell him the name of every man he met. I, who concern myself so little with other people's affairs, should have been often out of patience to have had a fellow constantly blowing strange names into my ears.

TYRE, in Phœnicia, and her colony, Carthage, were so entirely devoted to trade and profit that a rich man was in more esteem than a philosopher, or an heroe. I shall always rejoice to see our commerce in a flourishing state, and affluence the reward of her labour: for the first is the nurse of maritime power, and carries our natural productions to market; and the latter is the food of arts, and the sinew of defence. But if, in Stockholm, the immense-
ly

ly rich were only esteemed, a very great number of us would soon sink into contempt.

BUT it were tedious to mention every instance in which we differ from the taste of our fore-fathers. It were more to our honour to have improved upon their virtues. All other taste is chaff before the wind: it may be supported a while, by now and then a fresh blast, but at length to dust, is trodden under our feet, rots, and evaporates.

I AM not so bigotted to the general taste of the present age, as to believe that the next generation will be much obliged to us for it. The thoughts which constitute most of our modern books may not, improperly, be compared to elastic balls; he that will catch them must be able to skip about the room: improper sport for an old man. Epigrams, in verse, are pretty enough; but when I find a profe-

writer every moment using one epigram to explain another, I have always an inclination to tell him, that his book is a jingle of words. I assure Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, without scruple, that, among the number of works which are daily issuing from the press, there are very few, to me, intelligible. The author hath generally burdened his meaning with so much imaginary ornament, that whilst I am endeavouring to reduce the words to their original signification, and range them according to my ideas of things, I am apt to lose the sense of the whole paragraph. Such books are not unlike the stuffs, mentioned by Madam Sevigné, of gold embroidered with gold, which are so profusely rich that neither ground nor figure can be distinguished.

EVEN after the additional improvement of so many successive ages, human understanding

is

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is yet far from being arrived at perfection. It is often weak, and calls out for encouragement and support; nay, frequently wants the pruning-knife to lop off its luxuriant branches. We are not seldom led into error by too high an opinion of our abilities; to which we may attribute every mistake in matters of religion. Men were prompted by their pride to seek for ambiguity in the plain word of God, and by that means divided the first Christian community into various sects. The same human arrogance may reasonably be supposed to have given rise to fabulous history. Nine singing girls, at the court of JUPITER, a Cretan king, pretended to be the daughters of the god JUPITER and MNEMOSYNE or memory. They assumed the patronage of arts and sciences, and obtained the name of MUSES. How many mighty men do we not find in real history,

H 5

who,

who received the highest honours without a better title than those nymphs had to deity? whose fame, if we could discover their first spring of action, would often be found to have had its birth from the too fortunate issue of some ill-concerted scheme.

No one in the world can wish more ardently, nor with more reason, than myself, to see Your ROYAL HIGHNESS acquainted with every possible variety of opinion; but let me advise you, whenever you meet with a doubt of importance, first to consult your own natural good sense; and if you find that insufficient, it will then be time enough to apply for other assistance.

I WISH YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS may not find, in this long, and perhaps too serious epistle, that in speaking of taste, I myself have discovered a want of it. Be that as it will,

it

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it remains no less certain, that true taste ought to be the inseparable companion of a crown.

WERE I not obliged, by a poor state of health, and a worn out brain, to seek ease and refreshment in the country, nothing in the world should separate me from a prince, who, of all temporal blessings, is the nearest to my heart; and whose increasing virtues add daily to the unspeakable veneration with which

I am, &c.

Leckoe, Aug. 4;

1753.

LET-

LETTER LXIII.

THE present unreasonable destruction of all kinds of game is so just a subject of complaint throughout the kingdom, that the sportsmen of the succeeding age will have great reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of their predecessors. Here in Westrogoth, where stags, and other deer, were almost become tame creatures, we are now sure to see ten wolves for one buck.

I AM not of opinion, that mankind ought to deny themselves the use of those creatures which were created for them. When I was young, I reasoned in the same manner with our youth at present, 'If I do not shoot, others will.' With this argument, cruelty was my daily companion to the woods; and if I happened to shoot a poor hare with six or seven
young

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young ones within her, I thought I had done a very extraordinary feat; * but now that I am better able to see things in a true light, I am convinced that Providence intended we should use, and not abuse, the works of the creation.

THOUGH I can sit down, very chearfully, to a homely repast, yet, I confess, I am not disgusted at the sight of good victuals; but it is surely an unpardonable piece of luxury to indulge our appetites with game killed at an improper time, with fish caught in fine nets, or in the season when they should increase and multiply. Such extravagance must infallibly make provisions scarce, and deprive the poor of their common subsistence: but sound and wholesome meats, the small tribute of a numerous

* A very extraordinary feat indeed. I know not what the Swedish hares maybe, but the English are not so prolific.

merous herd, together with the kind gifts of vegetable nature, should not only be received with gratitude, but as an encouragement to art and labour, may be considered as the proper use of wealth.

I KNOW not but it might be worth while for those of a refined taste in eating, to endeavour, in the art of cookery, to introduce more of our own productions; and perhaps an order of the government might not be improper for that purpose. American spices were never intended by Providence for our food. In hot climates they may be necessary to expel the inward heat of the body, and increase perspiration; but I believe them generally too violent for northern constitutions. Nature has certainly provided every country with food proper for its inhabitants; but luxury, avarice, and curiosity, have hoisted our sails to fetch diseases

diseases from distant climes. Not but I believe, if it were possible to transplant, and as it were naturalize these exotics in our own soil, that they would then be no longer prejudicial.

WE have laws to prevent luxury in apparel, which luxury, it might be urged, would afford employment to great numbers of people. We have laws that set bounds to festival pomp, and limit the number of dishes. But would it not be more adviseable to leave the quantity to every one's discretion, and regulate the quality? for, otherwise, a single scarce plate may cost more than ten common dishes. I remember a great variety of excellent Swedish ones, which have long since been forced to give way to novelty. The English nation pay more respect to the taste of their fore-fathers. Though they surpass us in point of wealth,

they

they have never lost their relish for good roast-beef and pudding.

I HAVE been told of a certain Frenchman, yet living, who paid five hundred livres for a dish of green pease, and shut himself up in his chamber to eat them, at the same time that, perhaps five hundred poor people were starving in the streets. I have also heard of an Englishman who, for a trifling fault, had turned his son out of doors. Several persons of quality interceded in the young gentleman's behalf, but all to no purpose: till, at last, they prevailed on the favorite cook to use his interest. He accordingly went to his master and demanded his dismissal. The old man was greatly surprised, offered to increase his wages, in short, bad him make his own terms rather than leave the house. But the cook replied, that he would never serve any man living who could turn
his

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his back on his own son; that in the end he, as a servant, had reason to expect much worse treatment. O! cries the old glutton, is that all? go and tell the lad to come hither. Peace was immediately made, and by the cook's interposition, every article ratified.

For a man to love his cook more than his son was undoubtedly an unpardonable crime; yet I would not, from hence, infer that we ought to have no taste at all: this sense might maintain a warm dispute with the other four, in case they should contend for precedence. My sole aim is to recommend moderation, and by preserving plenty, to provide for the indigent.

I AM convinced that Your ROYAL HIGHNESS knows, already, how to chuse with judgment and reject with propriety. There is an old saying, that knowledge is no burden;

den; from which I would conclude, that even a prince may, without censure, know how a table should be spread, filled, and adorned with elegance: provided, when occasion requires, he is able, with a twelfth CHARLES in the field, to rise from a soldier's dinner well satisfied.

To inflict unnecessary hardships on our own bodies, is the ridiculous and imaginary merit of an anchoret. It is certainly very allowable, at proper times, rationally to consult our own ease: but he that knows not how to dispense with it, deserves not the name of a man. I believe we may venture to affirm that political œconomy, rather than religion, is the true reason why the members of the Romish church are forbid, on certain days, to eat flesh, which, by this means, is preserved in greater plenty, and their fishery supported and improved.

IN

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IN Germany and France there is an incredible quantity of all sorts of game; because they have destroyed every voracious animal, because the chase is prohibited at improper seasons, and because they carefully preserve certain woods of refuge. In these countries it is an affront to pursue your diversion, without previous leave, thro' another's territory. If this was our case, every one would preserve his own game, and all our woods would be better stocked.

• THE business of a king extends itself to every branch of national œconomy. His subjects are not only those that are contemporary with him, but all that are born after him, in the same kingdom, so long as it shall subsist. He is their steward, and their guardian, when he is dead, his wards are yet alive, and have always a right to censure or approve his care

care or neglect of their inheritance. No king can without great impropriety say, in the italian proverb. 'Morto mi, morto il mondo.'

I am, &c.

Leckoe, Aug. 8,

1753.

LETTER LXIV.

WHEN shall we be able to say, 'now
'is our labour at an end.' Man, from his creation, never wanted, nor so long as the world endures, ever will he want employment. He may be compared to an indefatigable ant, which, having just dragged its burden to the top of the hill, is often, by the foot of some rational, or irrational, animal, cruelly hurled down to the very bottom, and obliged to begin its task anew.

THIS

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THIS may be observed, with no less truth, of whole nations than of particular men. New projects, new experiments, new inventions, new improvements, are continually succeeding each other, till both prince and people seem to be arrived at their very highest degree of felicity; when, on a sudden, a destructive war breaks forth, or a careless reign succeeds: a TIBERIUS mounts the throne of an AUGUSTUS, or a degenerate COMMODUS ruins, in the space of thirteen years, the edifice which four preceding emperors had been fourscore in raising.

LEWIS the fourteenth reigned upwards of seventy years. Being naturally ambitious, and indefatigable, he neither forgot his army, his navy, trade, finances, arts, sciences, civil policy, or any other branch of government. Would not one imagine, that the successors of
such

such a king would have no other business than to maintain things in the same order? but the reign of his present majesty has shewn us, how many alterations were necessary, and improvements possible.

HISTORIANS tell us, that ALEXANDER wept, whenever his father took a town. These, in my opinion, were childish tears. He, after PHILIP's death, found work enough undone. Whether he acted consistently in the execution, is a question foreign to my subject. The enquiry might, however, serve to convince us, that the greatest princes are fallible and sometimes belie their character.

SWEDEN, within the last two hundred years, has been happy in many excellent sovereigns. GUSTAVE the first was a prince who always shewed a remarkable tenderness for his people. JOHN the third, who was a
skilful

YOUNG PRINCE. 191

skilful architect, contributed greatly to the embellishment of his kingdom. CHARLES the ninth was a wise legislator; GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, a successful hero: CHRISTINA, the mother of science; CHARLES GUSTAVE, a zealous improver of his country; CHARLES the XIth a very assiduous, but not quite disinterested, economist; CHARLES the XIIth, a most expeditious and intrepid hero; FREDERICK the first, a pious and affable prince, to whom we are obliged for many useful regulations: and who amongst us is not, by two years experience, convinced that his present Majesty will govern the part of the world allotted him by Providence, in a manner worthy of himself? Nevertheless, his successors will have no reason to weep lest he should leave nothing for them to finish.

THE

THE King of kings, in anointing the rulers of mankind, hath assigned them a continued chain of duties, that will not be finished till the world shall cease to be. The same omnipotent Being could, if he had thought fit, have enlightened their understandings in an especial manner, and influenced their hearts so as to render them incapable of error: but in giving them human weakness, he gave them also man's greatest privilege, a free-will; and by making these princes of the earth free-agents, he gave mankind a right to judge impartially of their actions. When time shall drag your part of the chain upon the anvil, let me advise Your ROYAL HIGHNESS to continue your work chearfully, without ceasing; and may your peoples love, and the praise and admiration of posterity, be the reward of your labour!

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BE careful, my dear PRINCE, not to believe that any man is predestinated to an inevitable fate. This were indirectly to confound God's justice with his omniscience, and must infallibly extinguish every spark of virtue.

NATURAL sense may be improved into a great facility of comprehension, a sound judgment, and, at last, an enlightened understanding: but this can never be effected, without a laborious perseverance. There are many people in the world who, one might imagine, have reason to accuse nature of partiality in her distribution of sense, when, in truth, their own negligence is the only cause of their stupidity.

'IT is my hard fate! how heaven afflicts me!' are exclamations commonly made by those who are the authors of their own misery. Not rightly understanding the meaning of

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I

'both

‘both good and evil coming from God,’ they are pleased to accuse heaven of what they have brought upon themselves.

THERE is no need to disturb the natural order of things for the immediate punishment of wickedness; for no vice came into the world without its punishment attached to it. An avaricious and unjust man, is universally hated, universally cursed. A drunkard must have an uncommon constitution, if diseases do not make him repent of his intemperance before he dies. A proud man, upon the least change of fortune, is sure to meet with derision and contempt. Where do we see an epicure that does not live to curse his gluttony in flannel? Debauchery cuts the thread of her own life. A licentious king is an encouragement to vice, and the cause of his own misfortunes. In short, every man of us, who dares to eat forbidden

YOUNG PRINCE. 195

forbidden fruit, soon feels the effect of his temerity. The temporal consequences of sin are more than sufficient to keep a wise man virtuous. Our final sentence is reserved to commence eternity.

THERE is, likewise, no reason why God should immediately give virtue her full reward. She is abundantly recompensed in her own tranquillity and the esteem of mankind. God hath promised, that he will bless her path; and God will not forget his promise. My dearest, kindest PRINCE! let me beg of you to make her your guide, and your people, for your sake, will be blessed.

LUCAN was of opinion, that the deeds of a great man are his best panegyric; to which a modern author adds, that it is more pleasing to be praised by the voice of the people, than in the song of a poet. What OVID, in a

flattering mood, said of his emperor, may, with more propriety, be applied to a king who is blessed with the love of his subjects,

Quodcunque est alto sub Jove, Cæsar habet.

I am, &c.

Æckeroe, Aug. 19,

1752.

A N S W E R to the preceding
L E T T E R.

I AM glad that my dear TESS is arrived at Æckeroe, because you are so much nearer, and I hope to see you soon again. I thank you for all your letters, and assure you they were all welcome to me. I hope you have also received my letters. I beg of you, my dear

TESS,

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TESS, to remember [me to] your dear lady,
and believe me,

My dear TESS,

Your faithful friend,

GUSTAVE.

LETTER LXV.

SINCE the last time I had the honour to see
Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, you have made
acquaintance with a new diversion, I mean
the french comedy, which, I am informed,
has been, several times, played before the
king, both at Ulrichsdahl and Drottningholm.

I DIFFER a little in opinion from those mo-
rose cavillers who would discover immorality
in every amusement; and I believe that the
minds as well as the bodies of most men require.

frequent relaxation. I look upon theatrical entertainments as a desert after a solid repast; which, though some people may rise satisfied without it, is, in its nature, neither dangerous nor unwholesome.

COMEDY, from its first rise, which is of very ancient date, has been gradually improving till it is, at last, arrived at the purity and perfection in which it now appears, especially on the french stage. At its first entrance into the world, its subjects were entirely * moral; but as this often made the audience yawn,

* WHETHER the Sicilians or Greeks had the honour of inventing comedy, is a matter of dispute among the learned; but, I think, it is generally agreed that SANNYTRION was the first who reduced it to method; and that the comic muse began with personal satire: therefore, what is here said of morality must be understood of dramatic poetry in general, which took its rise from the hymns that were sung to the praise of BACCHUS.

yawn, the comic muse began a general criticism on the manners of mankind, which was, soon after, converted into personal satire, that frequently had no better foundation than envy or revenge. We have glaring instances of this in the works of ARISTOPHANES, where we find some of the greatest men of Athens personally satirized in a manner which, in our delicate age, would be judged criminal. Had this poet wrote in the reign of LEWIS the fourteenth, he would have seen a mournful example in the fate of BIANCOLELLIS, who, for his impertinent wit, was condemned to spend the remainder of his days chained to an oar.

AFTER the spreading of Christianity, several parts of sacred history were, in a very unbecoming manner, brought upon the stage; many of which dramatic pieces are yet ex-

tant in the french language. But these religious poets being deservedly silenced, a set of profane ones succeeded, who soon pushed the theatre into the opposite extreme. The most abominable vices were exhibited in their naked deformity, and made to speak their natural language, without regard to the sex or quality of the spectators. These indecent shifts of bad poets still infect the * english and italian stages.

ALL

* I wish it was in my power to contradict this assertion; but I cannot help being pleased with the opportunity it gives me, of declaring my surprise that we are not yet more— I had almost said, civilized, than to suffer such indecent scenes as are but too frequent, in some of our comedies. To point them out, were needless: no woman of virtue, or man of sense, but must have been too often shocked with the impudence of certain poets, not to remember their names. Though it may not appear from ARISTOTLE's definition,

th. 2

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ALL nations, however remote or uncivilized, have found pleasure in public diversions.

I 5

It

that the true design of comedy is, or ought to be, to make men virtuous; to correct their vices and follies by exposing them in a ridiculous light; but this is certainly to be understood of such vices as may be exposed without offending the ears of chastity. Many of our dramatic poets, with all our Romance-writers (Mr. RICHARDSON excepted) seem to have erred; from a false notion, that the perfection of their art consists in representing nature; without considering that nature is often a very improper spectacle; that loose writers discover themselves to be men of neither principles nor taste; and that as often as they approach obscenity, they forget the respect which they owe to the public. Beside, if they were acquainted with the history of the several stages in Europe, they would find, that the most stupid are the most licentious; that all theatres have grown chaste in proportion as they have improved in other respects. I am sorry to own that, in this the French have a great superiority over us, and that we cannot expect to rival them, till we have purged our stage of every idea that ought to make a modest woman blush.

J'aime.

It was formerly a custom, in these northern kingdoms, to meet in large assemblies and listen to the recital of old heroic poems. I am told this is still practised in some parts of America. The Chinese stage is fixed in the open street. We find one of their dramatic poems in DU HALDE's travels, which, with a little help, might be made tolerable. But a regular treatise on this subject would be tedious and unnecessary, as Your ROYAL HIGHNESS may find several authors who

have

J'aime, sur le theatre, un agreable auteur
 Qui, sans se diffamer aux yeux du spectateur,
 Plait par la raison seule, & jamais ne la choque !
 Mais pour un faux plaisant, à grossière équivoque,
 Qui, pour me divertir, n'a que la saleté ;
 Qu'il s'en aille, s'il veut, sur deux tréteaux monté,
 Amusant le Pont-neuf de ses fornettes fades,
 Aux laquais assemblez jouer ses mascarades.

BOILEAU. l'Art. Poë.

have made it the principal object of their enquiry.

MOLIERE may be considered in the double capacity of reviver and author of good comedy; some of whose plays are imitated from PLAUTUS, and some entirely original. He was the first who banished the licentious muse, and prescribed rules for the french stage. How well he was qualified for the task, appears from his still maintaining the first place in the rank of comic poets. REGNARD, in my opinion, has approached him the nearest: he may be considered as the TERENCE of the French; but MOLIERE will always remain their PLAUTUS.

THE french stage, which of all others is allowed to be the most regular, and pure, may be considered as consisting of opera, tragedy, and comedy. The first is foreign.

to our present subject. The last is divided into 'haut et bas comique,' or genteel and low comedy. There is yet another kind of drama, of late invention, called 'le genre larmoyant,' or pathetic comedy; which has insinuated itself between tragedy and comedy; but as it wants the importance and dignity of the first, and the spirit of the latter, I doubt much whether it will long maintain its credit.

THERE are two articles in the french drama which, I think, might be altered to advantage. First, in representing virtuous characters, in the room of exposing vice; for it is not sufficient to create an aversion for the one, without rendering the other amiable. But I am afraid the great difficulty of painting virtue in her proper colours will hinder me from seeing my wish accomplished. The other improvement which I would propose to their

tragic

tragic poets is, that they should be less frequent with their worn-out love-intrigues, and stick a little closer to historical truth.

I AM not ignorant of the general importance of the so-called UNITIES OF TIME AND PLACE; but as the only design of this rule is to preserve probability, I cannot help thinking, where so many other circumstances join to deceive me, but it might admit of frequent exceptions. Who, for example, can ever be brought to imagine, that a french theatre is a roman senate-house? What spectator can so far impose upon his reason as to receive the idea of a Roman consul; from an actor in a full-bottomed wig, and a theatrical hoop? Or what rational creature can find the least congruity, between alternate * music and scenes

of

* So long as the music of the theatre is chosen at random without any regard to the tragedy, I agree with the author;

but

of woe? not to mention many other things which contribute to destroy that probability which the unity of time and place endeavour to preserve.

I MIGHT perhaps have chosen something more useful for the subject of this letter; but I thought it not amiss to give Your ROYAL
HIGHNESS

but this is not from a natural disagreement in the sound of instruments with the passion of sorrow. By adapting the music, that is played between the acts, to the ideas of the poet, we might add greatly to the perfection of tragedy. I doubt not but this will seem a ridiculous refinement to those who are insensible to the power of harmony. For my part, I have often been more shock'd at the striking up of a jig at the end of a scene which hath drawn tears from me, than if, out of a hot room, I had been plunged into a cold-bath. A witty epilogue, or a farce after a good tragedy have much the same effect. But this is not all that might be said on the subject of improving the stage.

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HIGHNESS a general idea of your present amusement.

THE stage is a very rational and allowable diversion so long as it is not suffered to interrupt things of greater weight; and to those that have sense enough to separate good from bad, may often prove a school of morality. The theatre is also of some use in a populous city, if we only consider it as a lounging place for idle folks, who would otherwise spend their evenings in taverns, coffee-houses, or even less innocently.

NOTWITHSTANDING what I have said, I would not be understood to recommend a constant attendance at the theatre; nor do I remember, in the history of any emperor or king, to have found the love of public shews numbered among his virtues. My opinion of the stage is, that it may be made an innocent and even
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profitable amusement, provided we follow the example of Your ROYAL FATHER, in using it with moderation.

I am, &c.

Eckeroe, Aug. 23,

1753.

LETTER LXVI.

THE ancients both honoured and disgraced the human tongue, in defining it to be the best and worst, noblest and most vile member of the body. Upon reflection, we shall find, in like manner, that not only all our passions become virtues or vices according as we use or abuse them, but that even our virtues, in the misapplication, lose their natural beauty, and assume the deformity of vice. Ambition, for example, is evident-

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ly the cause of both good and evil. It was an ill-timed inclination to aspire, that caused our original fall, and it is by a laudable thirst after glory, that we must rise again. A generous ambition warmed the heart of AUGUSTUS, and a diabolical one fired the souls of TIBERIUS and NERO.

ALL mankind, whether born to command or obey, are prompted by ambition to attach themselves to the giddy wheel of fortune. It is ambition that spreads devastation through the land, and stains our waters with blood. It is ambition that gives victory to small armies, and the same passion, ill governed, is often the ruin of the most numerous. It is ambition that makes kings truly great; it is ambition that transforms a father of his country into a vulture, preying upon her vitals. It is ambition that builds palaces, encourages

arts,

arts, and supports industry. It is ambition that pulls down the fabric of her own hands, despises knowledge and neglects virtue. It is ambition that lifts one man to the pinnacle of honour, and another to the scaffold.

IF YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS should ask how it happens that such opposite effects are produced by the same cause, I must tell you, that ambition, love, and fortune, are all three blind, and are led by moderation, reflection, and prudence. Now though these guides are naturally careful, yet it sometimes happens that they unluckily leave their poor blind masters to themselves, who then stumble and fall into the ditch.

FROM hence, as from every other rational contemplation, we are led to admire and adore the wise dispensations of Providence. How
could

could a man have boasted of his FREE WILL, if, in the same manner that all his Actions are voluntary, it had not been also in his power to make a good or bad use of his Passions.

I HAVE often told Your ROYAL HIGHNESS that the felicity of a king does not so much consist in the splendour of his throne, as in the love of his people; but I do not remember ever to have mentioned in what degree he is obliged to their ambition.

How unhappy must be the kingdom where ambition is entirely extinguished! How ill would the prince be served, how slowly would his orders be executed, if all his subjects were satisfied with their fortunes, and had no other motive but their duty! One of the principal arts of government is to encourage ambition, but at the same time to regard it with the eye
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of a skilful physician, who does not attempt to damp the fever till he has reason to dread the effect of its violence.

A KING that honours GOD; a king who pursues his own honour with moderation; a king who supports his subjects in the slippery path of honour, is a wise and happy monarch. A subject who has reason to obey his sovereign with chearfulness; a subject who daily reads favour in the eyes of his prince; a subject who is satisfied with the consciousness of having done his duty, and expects no other reward; a subject who in the serene weather is not unprovided against storm or inundation; a subject who, amidst the hurry of business, is not dazzled with the glittering of false honour, but keeps his eye constantly fixed on the delightful prospect of philosophic retire-

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YOUNG PRINCE. 213

ment and a peaceful conscience; is of all subjects the happiest.

I am, &c.

Eckeroe, Aug. 26,

1753.

LETTER LXVII.

I BELIEVE we may venture to lay it down as an axiom, that all things whatsoever are of a compound or mixed nature. When Your ROYAL HIGHNESS begins with physical enquiries, you will soon be of this opinion; which, by a thousand chymical experiments, is proved beyond contradiction. But you will be surprized when I tell you, that even virtue itself is imperfect till it be properly mingled and prepared.

GREAT

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GREAT piety, without a suitable addition of patience, would be apt to betray us into ill-timed and ineffectual anger at the vices and follies of mankind. A king, merely gracious and mild, would infallibly open the gates to a deluge of vices. A prince who would act by no other principle but that of severe justice, would deserve the name of a tyrant. A hero without compassion would be accounted wild and blood-thirsty; and a merely cautious prince would be deemed a coward.

IF YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS pleases to examine every other virtue, I believe you will find that, like some medicinal herbs, if not properly mixed, they are unwholesome and often poisonous. In short, abstract a single virtue from its proper allay, and it immediately becomes a vice. All men are born susceptible of virtuous impressions: but to say
that

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that any man is, by nature, virtuous, is absurd. Virtue is the child of education, and I had almost said, is a just mixture of good and evil. It is not to an undiscerning spend-thrift that we give the name of a generous man; but to him who distributes in proportion to his ability; or who tempers his bounty with a necessary mixture of avarice.

THOSE who have spent their time and money in fruitless attempts to make gold, tell us, in excuse for their folly, that they well know all the necessary ingredients, but have not been able to hit upon the proper quantity of each. It is much the same in the case of virtue: there are numbers of people that are well acquainted with the nature of it, but very few who have been able to succeed in the due combination of parts.

LET

LET me advise Your ROYAL HIGHNESS to endeavour to penetrate into the bottom of your own heart, accustom your growing virtues to a dutiful subjection, and then deliver the helm to your natural good sense, which will always be your best pilot through the dangerous sea of human life.

It often happens that well disposed princes, during the course of a long reign, never advance farther than the gates of the temple of virtue; and that the best seeds are suffered to perish, for want of a little care. But I am assured Your ROYAL HIGHNESS will reward my sincerity by following my advice, and that our mutual zeal will call down a blessing upon our endeavours.

If you should think proper to allow this subject a farther discussion at my return, in order to ascertain the due measure of each
virtue,

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virtue, I shall think it a princely employment for Your ROYAL HIGHNESS; and, for me, an exercise of mind that may contribute to render me more worthy to live and die

Your, &c.

Æckerøe, Aug. 30,

1753.

LETTER LXVIII.

WHO can resemble more a thief than he that waits but for the death of others to attack their reputation? The thief lurks in expectation of a clear house; and the slanderer, till the inhabitant of the body be departed. A thief is impatient for the coming of the night, when the watch shall repose in security; and the reputation-thief waits till the final sleep of death has closed our eyes,

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and delivered him from the fear of detection. A common thief takes care to make no attempt, where he has the least resistance to fear; the stealer of our good name is, in like manner, careful to leave those unattacked who are armed and upon their guard. In short, let us continue the comparison ever so far, we shall find an invariable similitude of cunning and cowardice to the very last. The only difference between them is, that he who is once branded with common theft, is pursued and punished whilst alive, and at his death, entails an odium upon his family for several generations: but how small is the number of those that rise in defence of an injured reputation? If the generality of men have so little generosity, ought not that of a king to be so much more extensive? Is it not his duty to defend the good name of his departed subjects,

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and punish those who would disturb and profane the sacred ashes of the dead?

LET me persuade Your ROYAL HIGHNESS never to think a faithful subject below your protection, even in the grave; never to suffer the infamous tongue of envy to blast the name of virtue, even in the tomb. It is the pleasing duty of a king to protect innocence, and to assure the privilege of justification to guilt itself. Now who can be more incapable of answering in their own cause, than those who have shut their gates, and are gone down to the peaceful chambers of the dead? If, in their past life, they have acquired a good character, the defamatory tongue of malice ought to prove nothing but the corruption of her own heart.

I CAN easily forgive a luke-warm friend who, whilst I am living, shews no great zeal

in my defence. My presence and the power of speaking for myself, his own private views, powerful adversaries, and many other circumstances, may in some degree, excuse, if not entirely justify him: but, were my ashes capable of revenge, I fear I should be irreconcilable to those timorous friends who could, with patience, hear my memory delivered up a prey to the tongue of calumny.

I HAVE made this the subject of a letter, because I would willingly leave nothing unattempted, that may contribute to make you truly great in the eye of heaven and of the world. Beside, I am prompted by too many examples of injured virtue, not to recommend the memory of honourable men to your care and protection. What an encouragement would it be to the living, to see their generous sovereign keep a pious watch over the tombs

of

YOUNG PRINCE. 221

of their fathers ! how would this increase their zeal, their fidelity, and their obedience !

WHEN any of your subjects have the misfortune to incur your displeasure, it will be in your power to deliver them over to the law ; but when they have once suffered the punishment due to their crimes, I flatter myself your noble heart will generously shield their names from the poison'd arrows of private malice : who will otherwise think herself authorised to shoot, under your banner, at a vanquished enemy.

My last will is already made. I have bequeathed my soul to her creator, the stem of my possessions to my creditors, and the remaining branches to my heirs. May Your ROYAL HIGHNESS be indulgent to my memory, and gracious to my friends, for my sake ! I can never be more consigned in the

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grave,

grave, than I have been, in the world: but the delightful occupation of marking out a proper path for Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, hath made me happily forget all my misfortunes. Heavens bless my endeavours, and I have lived long and happily enough!

DEAREST SIR! let me beseech you to shew yourself a friend to mankind, and to be careful how you wound the hearts of those that are within your power. I am always sorry when, for want of a little reflection, I have given pain even to a servant; yet he, to escape my anger, has it in his power to quit my service. How much more careful ought not a king to be of the happiness of a subject, who has often no refuge or consolation, but his silent, conscious innocence; whose allegiance, or circumstances, do not allow him to attempt a change of fortune!

As

YOUNG PRINCE. 223

As to my fate, it is more than tolerable, since I
see Your ROYAL HIGHNESS daily improve
in every christian and royal virtue ; which adds
hourly to the high esteem and veneration
with which

I am, &c.

Æckerøe, Sept. 6.

1753.

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LETTER LXIX.

DOES Your ROYAL HIGHNESS think it would be below the dignity of a king to employ part of his leisure hours in agriculture? I ask this question because I know that my desire to see you perfect in all things, might possibly extend my speculations too far.

I AM not ignorant that times and manners are too much changed to allow the same hand to guide the plow and wield the sword; but I am no less certain, that trade and agriculture are the true basis of a happy and flourishing kingdom. I also believe the proverb to be grounded on experience which says, 'Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis;' and hence I am apt to conclude it necessary, that a king, as in other things, should set his subjects

subjects an example in his taste for planting, gardening, and agriculture. Were I the possessor of delightful Ekholmsfund, I would immediately inclose a certain quantity of acres, and by uncommon assiduity would endeavour to bring them to the highest possible degree of fertility. I would be informed in every branch of rural œconomy, and please myself with imagining that I found a more exquisite relish in that which was the fruit of my own labour, and had sprung up under my own eye.

FAR be it from me to metamorphose a prince into a peasant. The skin of the first must be burnt and hardened at the head of an army, and that of the latter at the tail of a plough. If a king should condescend to turn the soil for his amusement, it would be to honour a vocation, which is not only the most ancient, but was esteemed the most noble,

till

till pride took the place of innocence, and the father began to believe himself highly honoured in his son's sword or * ruff. This epidemical evil is not to be cured till people of distinction, by their example, encourage the rest of mankind to set a true value on the art of agriculture. Experience will teach **YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS** that a kingdom's greatest weakness proceeds from the want of those useful men who, by the sweat of their brow, supply their fellow-subjects with daily bread. You will, then, not think me to blame in preferring a sober, peaceful peasant, to his coxcomb-son, strutting with his hat over one eye, and dealing blows to his father's servants.

I AM so far from endeavouring to imbit-
ter your pleasures, that I could say much in
praise

* PART of a Lutheran clergyman's habit.

praise of public shews, festivals, music and dancing; for I myself was formerly an eager disciple of these schools of vanity; and, like an old hunter, who revives at the sound of the horn, I have a secret pleasure in seeing others follow the diversions for which I, by age, am disqualified.

I WISH it were in my power to inspire my countrymen with the love of rural innocence! would I could give them an idea of that pleasure which men enjoy who attend their acres chearfully, and with assiduity! and what can be more natural and delightful, when we are fatigued and emaciated by labour and amusement, than to recover our vigour in solitude and repose?

It will be necessary that Your ROYAL HIGHNESS should distinguish between pleasures of a light nature, and those which are
solid

solid and useful. The first leave nothing behind them, except discontent, whilst the latter afford a second enjoyment in the recollection. If what I have said should not appear sufficiently plain at present, time and reflection will make it more obvious. I am not writing to one of my own age, but to a young prince, who, after a few years experience, will be convinced of the truth and sincerity of all my letters; which, if they have no other effect, will, at least, be a future proof of the eternal zeal and veneration with which

I am, &c.

Æckeroe, Sept. 12,

1753.

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END of the SECOND VOLUME.